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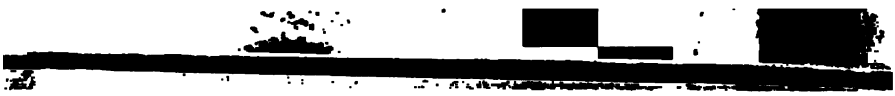
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The Barbary Coast





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BEDOUIN GIRL

The Barbary Coast

Sketches of French North Africa

By Albert Edwards
Arthur Reid, C.
Author of "Panama: The Canal, the Country, and the People," "A Man's World," "Comrade Yetta," etc.

With Illustrations



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NEW YORK, 1913
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Set up and electrotyped. Published September, 1913

Norwood Press
J. S. Cushing Co. — Berwick & Smith Co.
Norwood, Mass., U.S.A.

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PREFACE

WITH the exception of Number Eight, which appeared in *The Coming Nation*, and Numbers One and Fifteen, which have not been previously printed, these sketches were published in *The Outlook*. I wish to thank the editors for their permission to reprint.

Beyond correcting typographical errors and attempting to make uniform the spellings of foreign words, I have altered their original form very little, although my point of view towards Mohammedanism and many of the problems of French North Africa — The Barbary Coast — has changed considerably since I wrote the earlier sketches.

I am deeply indebted for kind hospitality to M. André Réclus of Köbr Roumïat, Algeria, and to Si Hassan bin Ali, Hadje Hussein Amzal, and especially to Muley Ahmed bin Hammo Azroor.

ALBERT EDWARDS.

NEW YORK CITY.
May, 1913.



INTRODUCTION

THE editing of these sketches for a volume has been a labor of love. Reading them over has revived the most pleasant of my memories.

I recall vividly the first time I encountered The East. Its fragrance — although my friends called it a "stench" — at once laid a spell upon me. In 1907, after two strenuous years "reporting" the Russian Revolution, I went aboard a ship at Odessa, bound for Constantinople, Trieste, and Western Europe — to the countries which I had almost forgotten those two years, where one does not have to be on the lookout for spies, and where a man can go about the ordinary business of life without fear of spending the night — and the rest of his days — in jail. It was a vast relief when we had satisfied the last gendarme that our passports were in order, and had been allowed to go aboard. There was a joyous relaxation in stepping out from under the shadow of the Tsar.

There were two hundred Muslim pilgrims on board *en route* for Mecca. They were mostly from Persia, a few from Samarkand way and the borders of Afghanistan. I had expected to sleep all the way to Constantinople, but the sight of these followers of a strange Prophet kept me on deck.

That trip across the Black Sea with those pilgrims of Islam opened the door for my imagination to a great civilization about which I knew nothing, to a long-established, traditional habit of mind with which I was unfamiliar — a vast region of golden romance and magic dreams which we of the West have forgotten.

Ever since that time the Domains of The Prophet have seemed wonderfully restful to me — a place to take one's weary nerves for re-creation — away from the merciless grind of our Western Life.

The obvious charm of The East lies in its ever present colorful contrasts. The tourist who stops a day in Algiers or passes a week in Constantinople, going down occasionally from the European hotels of Pera to the bazaars and mosques of Stamboul, sees it. I find among

my notes an account of my first visit to a Mohammedan town. Written at the time, I recorded the obvious.

"As the *diligence* from Orleansville swings around the orange corner which ends the Gorge and opens up to the Bay of Tênès, you catch —if you are up 'on high' by the driver — a vision of stunning contrasts.

"For an hour you are in a narrow ravine above a frantic, tossing stream. On the other side is a sheer precipice as gorgeous in its reds and purples as the orange cliff the coach-wheels scrape. The *diligence* rattles around the shoulder, and the view widens out suddenly. The cliffs to the right break back into tree-covered slopes, then abruptly become precipitous again and terminate in a gigantic granite boulder, — Cap Rouge, — three times as big as Gibraltar. Before you is a triangular alluvial plain as flat as a billiard table and greener. The little river, Wad Allahala, suddenly quieted after its plunge down the mountains, runs in a straight, placid course to the sea. On the left the hills rise so softly that it is hard to tell where they begin. On a little knob, sheer above the

surf, is the new town of Ténès. You wish it were not there. It spoils the picture. It is modern, shamelessly, appallingly modern. The chrome yellow stone fortifications have not yet begun to get moss-grown, and above them tower the square stucco barracks. The inevitable dirty linen of the garrison hangs from the windows. A cable which carries red, noisy buckets of iron ore from the mine in the hills to the port is equally vile. But every other prospect pleases.

"Of the green triangle before you, the base is formed by the line of white sand and the breakers, with the immensely blue sea beyond. In its apex, just below you, is the native city — Le Vieux Ténès. As you turn suddenly out of the narrow gorge, the old town lies below you like a delicate alabaster carving set on a cloth of green damask. A slender minaret rises above the domed mosque, sharply outlined against the fields of new oats and darker wheat.

"But the spell of its beauty is broken — or perhaps its faery beauty is enhanced — by the screaming red buckets of iron ore, which chase one another down the long steel cable on their

journey to the far-away smelters of England. Just over the mosque they pass. The voice of the *moodhen*, calling the Faithful to prayer from the top of the minaret, is quite drowned in the roar of rushing commerce.

"'*Allah akbar*,' the *moodhen* chants.

"'Business is business,' the buckets sneer back at him.

"The East and The West! Over the beautiful old city modern industry casts the shadow of death. Old Ténès still exists because as yet no Frenchman has discovered how to make money out of tearing it down. You must come to Barbary soon if you wish to see any of its ancient glory.

"At each turn of the road, as it winds down into the valley, the *diligence* brings you nearer and nearer the old city. There is one place — just on a level with the town — which gives perhaps the most charming view. From this point, the white walls and the minaret, instead of being traced against the green, have the blue of the sea and sky for background. You are near enough to distinguish the white-robed figures, moving sedately through the quaint

streets, or squatted in solemn groups on the flat roof; near enough to see the yellow oranges among the leaves; near enough, almost, to catch the scent of the myriad blossoms, the bloom of the orchards, and of the innumerable strange flowers with which the Arabs deck their gardens.

"But, alas! Some new foundations are pushing up above the ground in the little space between the road and the great gate with the Moorish arch.

"'What is that?' I asked the driver.

"'The new school for the *indigènes*,' he said proudly. And he went on to tell me how the Arab children refused to walk all the long way to the school in New Ténès.

"'It is hard to civilize them,' he said in a voice which expressed the French determination to 'civilize' them willy-nilly.

"So the government is building a school for them right under their walls. I can see the schoolhouse already, just as appallingly barn-like as the barracks, and right in the place to spoil the best view. It seems almost as shocking as the iron mine! Compulsory education

for Arabs! Instead of stealing their wives, according to the old custom, the French steal their children. And, of course, compulsory army service, compulsory absinthe, compulsory disease, will follow next. When you begin 'compelling' it is hard to stop.

"There is nothing to see in French Ténès. It is as barren and dismal and scrawny as a new frontier town could be. All over Algeria the enterprising government is creating such centers of civilization. It builds a town hall, a post-office, a gendarmerie, and a school, hires a *maire*, a blacksmith, a policeman, and a school-teacher, — in the old days, before 'The Separation,' it added a church and a priest. Then it takes thirty or forty farms away from the Arabs and gives them to colonists, and so progress progresses.

"I had some lunch and turned back to Old Ténès. It is not the oldest Ténès, for that is gone. It is Moorish, an ancient stronghold of the Barbary Pirates. In a ruined wall, part of an old Christian church, there is a stone all covered over with quaint Phœnician letters. For way back in the time when Cato was crying

out his anathema against Carthage (which I once learned by heart, but have forgotten along with the rule about 'utor, fruor, fungor, potior, and vescor'), Ténès was a thriving Carthaginian colony. In those days the little stream had not yet carried down enough mud to form the fair green field you see to-day. The Carthaginian boats came right up to the walls of the town, — you can still see the stone posts to which they tied their hawsers. These posts and the stone found in the wall of the long-ruined Christian church is all that is left of Carthaginian Ténès.

"Much more remains of the Roman period. Two big square towers still stick up above the white, flat Moorish roofs. When I entered the town I tied my horse to a fluted Ionic column before the Café Maure. The streets are so narrow and so full of children that you have to tie your horse. As I continued on foot, at almost every step, I found something which recalled the days of Togas and the Pretorian Guard, — a doorstep made from an old stone lintel piece, a pot of flowers set on a carved Corinthian capital, a piece of mosaic done into a wall and almost hidden by the whitewash.

I found a little lassie — still too young to wear a veil — grinding flour in an old Roman hand-mill. Only the wooden handle in the top stone was new. Suppose that mill was made towards the end of the Roman domination, the third century, that leaves sixteen hundred years, forty-eight generations. Like as not this little girl was the forty-eighth granddaughter of the first woman who turned that mill. For the immigration which has so often swept over this part of the world has always been military and masculine. The French are the first people who have brought their women with them.

"First of all, a rollicking crew from a Carthaginian trading boat came ashore. More followed, and so the city grew by immigration of men and the birth of half-breeds. Then Scipio tore down the Carthaginian walls and left a Roman garrison to rebuild the city and repeople it as their predecessors had done. As the Christian Empire was rotting away, the Goths, tired of Spain, crossed the Straits of Gibraltar and swarmed eastwards — killing the men, sparing the women. It was the same with the armed apostles of Mohammed. The same

with the Corsairs. Barbarossa, the first pirate prince of Algiers, was a renegade Christian from one of the Greek islands. His followers were as cosmopolitan a gang of cut-throats as ever got together for such business. They had no home to bring wives from. They took what the gods threw in their way. Then came the Turks. And in 1830 the army of Louis Philippe. Twenty years ago the French started the innovation of bringing wives from the home-land. So a certain element of excitement has gone out of the lives of the native women. If, in the future, their children are half-breeds, it will be of their own free wills.

"I strolled about the town till dusk, watching the strange life of this much-conquered people. The charm of the Arab quarter in Algiers is tripled here, for it has not been soiled by the tourists. Foreigners are not allowed to live in the town. The natives do not beg, nor try to sell you things. It is real Araby.

"As I wandered through their crooked streets, peered into their open bazaars, turned to look after their mystic, veiled women, the men lifted their eyes at me a moment, eyes in

which I saw a little scornful curiosity, but, above all, supreme contempt.

"The screech of the iron-ore overhead gave me a comfort of which I was ashamed. If we of the West are not so wise as they of the East, we are at least better business men. If we cannot understand them, we can kill them. The thought was a straw at which my drowning self-respect clutched desperately."

But if I should go back to Ténès this winter — as I hope I may — I would not be so much impressed with the visual contrasts which charmed me at first, — the rivalry of the mine-cable and the minaret; the brand new French town and the ancient city; the modern civilization which is trying to drive its roots into the soil formed from the ruins left by the many people who have passed before. There is a deeper, more elusive contrast that charms me now.

In the months I have spent in the lands of The Prophet I find that the clothes of his followers interest me less and less. I myself have learned how to wear them. I can even manage to control Moorish slippers when

mounting a horse — no small feat, as any one who has tried will bear witness. I know their salutations, I have acquired much of their etiquette. With the pretence of a paralyzed tongue or of a vow to silence, I could pass among them unnoticed; I have done so. But although every year I learn more about such outward things, the charm of their mystery grows apace.

Some years ago in Tangier I picked up a beautifully illuminated Arabic manuscript. I could not decipher even its title. I encountered an American friend, and we sat down in a café of the Socco Chico to examine my treasure. A dervish of the Order of the Derkawa was standing rigid in a corner of the market place — apparently oblivious of the rush of multi-colored life about him. Now and then he awoke from the immobility of his devotion and cried out in penetrating tones the Name of God. He wore a single tattered tunic that scarcely hid his nakedness. Around his neck hung the rosary of ninety-nine great beads which was to protect him from devils, and in his hand was a clumsy spear to protect him from dogs and men. His body was gaunt and



Photograph by Geo. E. Holt, Tangier.

A PAGE OF SHILLAH POETRY



shrunken with abstinence, and his uncut mane of hair was matted with filth. But yet there was an element of beauty about him; perhaps it lay in his great, smouldering brown eyes. His sonorous invocations distracted us from the manuscript.

"Is he simply crazy?" my friend asked, "or has he found some handle to The Truth which we do not know?" — "It's like this Arabic writing," she went on, "it's weird and mysteriously beautiful. We look at it and don't know what it means. Perhaps all it tells is how to plan a garden — I suppose treatises on agriculture have been written in Arabic — but perhaps it is The Key to The Kingdom of Heaven."

Therein, I think, lies most of this elusive charm of The East. It is like a page from one of their books — written in a most beautiful script. We cannot understand it. Perhaps it is not worth understanding. But perhaps —

Very likely to understand The East would be to escape from its lure. But the Call of the Wild, the Voice of the Little Red Gods, seem very weak to me compared to the haunting

summons of the *moodhen* atop of the minaret. There is ever the feeling that the *tolba* — The Wise Men of Islam — know something of which I have never dreamed — something worth knowing.

Brushing aside such obvious differences as clothes and the way they wear their beards, these Mohammedans seem very like the men among whom I grew up. But they do not care for the same things — at least, not for the same reasons.

My first winter in Algeria I had a striking revelation of this difference in the standards of value. It impressed me deeply.

I had asked my host about the jackals which howled the night through in the *brousse* about his home. I was curious to know how much they resembled the coyotes of our Western plains. A few days later he called me from my desk with the news that some of his Arab workmen had trapped a jackal. I followed him out into the patio and found a half dozen natives squatted about an earthen pot. Two of them were holding the animal while another skinned it. A jackal looks like nothing but a

very sick and mangy dog. I cannot imagine anything less appetizing. I was surprised and rather nauseated to see that the men were preparing the beast for cooking.

"Do the natives eat these things?" I disgustedly asked my host in French.

The man who seemed to be the chief cook understood the language of the conquerors. He looked up surlily.

"Yes," he growled. "But we don't eat pig."

I thought of our slaughter-house scandals and the doubtful cleanliness of our food supply, and felt very much like the owner of a glass house who had thoughtlessly begun to throw stones.

Jackals or swine? It would be rather hard to determine which — as a table delicacy — represents the higher degree of civilization and refinement.

There is very much in the life of the Barbary States to shock a Westerner: shameless indifference to the pain which comes from unsanitary carelessness, appalling cruelty to beasts of burden, slave-owning, a grossly stupid attitude to women.

But for every criticism we bring against

Mohammedan civilization, the followers of The Prophet can bring criticism against us. It is not that they consider themselves as good as we. They are deeply convinced that their ideals and traditions, their beliefs and customs, are infinitely superior to ours.

There is an element of charm even in their disdain, — and no colonial officer looks down on the "native" with more thorough-going scorn than the Mohammedan feels for us. If only one man in a company despises me, I can comfort myself by hating him and calling him a fool. But when the contempt is unanimous, it would take a stronger-minded man than I not to begin to believe in the reality of the superiority so calmly assumed. The all-pervadingness of it relieves it of offensiveness. "The Learning of the West," Schopenhauer said, "flattens out against the Wisdom of the East like a leaden bullet against a stone." Often as I have looked into the deep, impenetrable, rather scornful eyes of a Muslim saint or "*taleb*," I have felt myself flattening. And it has been, I think, good for my soul.

After all, is swine's flesh any better than

jackal meat? Is the rush of our electric speed preferable to peace? The East stirs a mystic question within me which aches for an answer. As I write of it, I hear "The Call." I must go back this winter — and try again to understand.

Here in New York, the rumble of the Elevated, the click of typewriters, in my ears, it does not seem probable that the answer to the Riddle of the Sphinx is worth knowing. But in spite of the noise of our marvellous mechanics, in spite of the clang of an ambulance bell in the street, which speaks of anæsthetics and disinfectants, an immense alleviation of pain; in spite of all this — or perhaps because of it — I want to go back. We, of the West, have certainly learned more than they about Logic and Life. But I have a feeling — not to be expressed on paper — that they know more than we about Dreaming and Dying.

NEW YORK CITY, May, 1913.

ماشاالله





I. ALGIERS

ALGIERS presents its problems visually — instantly. Generally the factors in these tangles of life, which we call cities, are multiple, intricate and hard to separate, but here the problem is stated clearly and sharply. It is always before the eyes. The Cross against The Crescent.

I am writing on the terrace of a little café on the Place de la République. In the square is a heavy growth of strange trees, — ilex, palm and almond. And out beyond is the blue bay, and beyond the bay are the blue mountains, for the twilight has turned them blue — and beyond the mountains is the bluer sky. The stars are beginning to glow. And all is held, as in a solution, in this wonderfully soft African air — softer than any other air, yet more tangible. For the perfumes of the unfamiliar flowers in the square give it a subtle body. It caresses and troubles your senses so that you can never forget its eternal presence.

At one of the little round iron tables near by there sits a slim, smart French officer. His tall boots are speckless, his red trousers are carefully pressed, and the tiny mustaches, which he never ceases to finger daintily, are studiously waxed. Of course there is a woman opposite him, and somehow they don't seem to be married. As they sip their iced drinks they turn the pages of *Le Journal Amusant* and laugh. No — she is not married — not to him. And yet in this perfect turquoise softness, it doesn't seem possible that they are vicious — just lightly, flippantly French.

But a shadow falls across their table as two stately natives pass between them and the electric light. One is a gigantic Soudanese negro, — a wonderful animal; his thick lips are as sensitive as a woman's, his shoulders as firm as a Greek Herakles, and below his flowing white robe, his stride, as he walks, is lithe and graceful as a panther's. The other is an old gaunt Moor, brown-skinned and wizened; his heavy black "*burnous*" flaps about his thin bare legs. Types of these strange African peoples — whom serious Frenchmen are beginning to

realize are not yet conquered. One — the negro — speaks of undying youth, of great animal strength as yet unsapped by European vices. The other — the Arab — with his deep quiet eyes, seems an epitome of the eternal ancient wisdom of the Orient. Unchanging, they have seen many a conqueror come — and go.

Their shadow as they pass falls across the light gayety of the French officer and his companion. For a moment their laughter is hushed, as they watch the two earnest, sober figures.

"*Sales cochons*" (dirty pigs), the officer murmurs audibly as he leans once more over the table to take up the thread of his witty conversation. But it is several minutes before I hear the woman's laugh again.

Yesterday afternoon our boat made anchor down there in the bay. The first view of the city is misleading — it looks so French. The docks and the stone embankment are new and business-like, above rises a row of modern hostelries — like those which line the Lake at Geneva. My hotel was a French hotel, the dinner I ate, the coffee I drank, were French.

I might have been back in Paris, on the Boulevard des Italiens.

But after dinner I went for a stroll. I was tired and it was to be a short one — but it lasted almost all the night. Along the edge of the bay, from the lighthouse on the cape to the heights of Mustapha, stretch two streets of fine modern houses. Behind them — hidden by them — rises the native city. A maze of crooked streets, more often stairways than streets, climb up to The Kasba, the old fortress of the Pirate Princes. And between the open bazaars and shops passes an interminable procession of strange folk, sombre and serious. All the weird, incomprehensible life of The Orient. A life which has thrown its bewitching glamour over me always. In the Caucasus, in Turkey — always it draws me as a magnet.

The East! The great Seductrice! How many great generals — how many a grave nation — have wooed it to their ruin! And now the French — *les petits enfants* of Napoleon, Napoleon whom she repulsed at Jaffa — are paying court to her. How will their suit progress? They, for the French are always



Photograph by Lehnert & Landrock, Tunis.

A DATE PALM OASIS



gallant lovers, come with their hands filled with the gifts of civilization — railroads, police, factories, and schools. My night's stroll through the native quarter did not show me any signs of very eager acceptance.

This afternoon I went to the Museum. Hardly worth seeing, the guide-book said, but there was nothing else to be done. A ghostly collection of broken stones — remnants left from the Roman days. I wandered about listlessly, more interested in the fine old Moorish palace in which the exhibits are housed, than in the exhibits themselves.

But abruptly I was shaken out of my indifference. It was a plaster figure, a man in agony, a man whose whole being quailed in the face of death. Hands and feet bound with ropes, he was dying fearfully. Its horror recalled "The Laocoön."

But this was "realism." Appalling, frightful "realism" — every muscle taut with fear, a face quivering spasmodically with terror. It was the realism for which a generation of artists have striven in vain. The nearest approach to

it in our times are some of the dramas of Strinberg. No ancient could have conceived such a thing. There was no form, no composition to it, no pedestal, even. It stood baldly on a wooden base. There was no slightest suggestion of artistic tradition about it. It was simple realism. So a man, who was afraid, would die.

For a moment I was dazed — frozen by the sheer horror of it. But the question rose and repeated itself insistently: Who could have done it? Surely the mind which could conceive such tragic fearsomeness would be world-known. Who could it be?

Dozing in a chair by the door was a wizened custodian, the medals of many campaigns across the breast of his uniform. He woke surlily when I spoke to him.

"Who made the statue there in the corner?" I asked.

"Oh," he said, shaking off his sleep and his surliness, "Monsieur wishes to know about the cast. Yes, yes, I will tell you. In the year 1569 . . ." he began, in the tone of a professional guide.

"No," I interrupted him impatiently, "just tell me the name of the sculptor who made it."

"It wasn't made by a sculptor," he said. "It isn't a statue, it's a mould."

A mould! At the word, the horror of it increased tenfold. Yes, as I looked at it again, I saw plainly that it could not be a work of Art. It was real. Some real man had died like that!

For a moment, the old guardian was silent, as he saw how moved I was by it. Then he began again — but not in the lifeless custodian tone — the cast, there, was a vital part of his life and he told me about it naïvely — frankly — as to one he felt would understand.

In the year 1569 a Mussulman named Geronimo — the man there before us — had been converted to Christianity, by an enslaved Spanish monk, Haedo.

The priest had told him that he must confess his faith before men, openly. Of course this meant death — the people would kill him as a renegade. But the priest Haedo told him the stories of all the Blessed Martyrs — of the joy that was set before him, how the dear Lord Jesus would open his comforting arms to receive him, how in the moment of his agony the loving hands of The Christ, who had been crucified,

would be reached out to bear him up. And the priest told him also of the glorious golden crown and the shining robe of light with which the Lady Mary would clothe him as she led him to his seat at the right hand of The Father. And Geronimo believed it all and went out into the market-place, threw down his turban, and cried aloud his new faith.

In those days the people of Algiers were building a mighty fortress, building it of concrete, block by block. They would put the great mould in place, where the block was to stand, then pour in the liquid cement, and many weeks afterwards, when it had hardened, they would take the mould away, and so block by block the fortress was building. And they took Geronimo, the renegade, tied hand and foot, and put him in the mould which was waiting, and poured in the cement about him. And in due time the shame which had come upon them was forgotten.

But the priest Haedo, many years after, was ransomed and returned to his home in Spain. And there in his latter days he wrote a book of his memoirs and recounted the martyrdom of his one convert. The book was published in

1612. So the story of Geronimo lived in the minds of men. And many, very many years after, when the French came and tore down the fortress, there was one among them who knew the tradition. He sought out the very block which the priest had described and there found all that was left of Geronimo. He poured plaster-of-paris into the mould which the Martyr's body had left. And so we know something more about this incident than the priest Haedo had told us.

The old custodian trembled as he told me this story. He recounted it, not as I have done, but ramblingly — in fragment. And after he had explained how the cast was made, he turned back in his narrative to the death of Geronimo.

"He was not afraid," he said, "as they led him up to his death — for he had faith. He believed all that the priest had told him. Soon, in a very few minutes, he would see his new Master. The Lord Jesus was waiting for him close by — in the clouds. He was not sad, he was happy. And as the cement was poured about him, he strained at his cords to stretch out his arms to the glory. And he kept his

eyes open to see God's face. But God did not come to meet him, you see. He hoped up to the last minute — but when he knew he was dying — and God hadn't come — his face changed."

"How do you know all that?" I asked.

"Look! Look at his face," he said. "Don't you see it? God didn't come."

No! God did not come to meet Geronimo. Where he had looked for joy and comfort, he found nothing but emptiness and fear; instead of the opening gates of Paradise, there was only blackness. And at that moment — the moment of disillusionment — the soul of Geronimo died, — "his face changed." A few seconds later, the cement stifled his body.

The old custodian was silent — looking up into the horror of that face.

"Are you a Christian?" I asked him abruptly.

"Uph! Uph!" he panted. "Why — yes — at home — in the church. But not here — not in the room with that."

"Why, yes!" he said, gathering himself together, "I'm a Christian, of course. I'm a



Photograph by Lehnert & Landrock, Tunis.

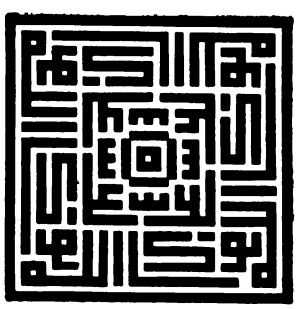
A TOWN MOOR



white man — French. But it isn't for them — they're too different. It doesn't fit."

And as I sit out here now — out on the terrace of the café — in the fast-falling night, the tragedy of Geronimo assumes greater proportions! The simple old custodian saw only that our religion — our God — had failed this Arab. I wonder if our civilization will "fit" them any better.

ALGIERS, 1908.



II. SIROCCO

AT half-past four in the morning there was a mighty pounding on my door.

"*Diligence? Il va partir,*" the *garçon* cried.

Well, I must make the best of it! I was on the quest of the primitive. I had left Paris in a *train de luxe*, had crossed the Mediterranean in a boat decidedly less luxurious, had come from Algiers to Orleanville in the most doleful railway train I had ever seen. Now I was waked at 4.30 to catch a stage-coach for Ténès. From there I would go on horseback to my destination — Geld-el-Haba. I was getting what I came for and I tried to recall, as I dressed myself by candle-light, how tired I was of such civilized comforts as electricity and street cars.

In the little Café de la Poste I drank my coffee while the mail was being put on, and took a look at my fellow-passengers. A couple of farmers and a nervous little woman — the wife of one of them — were booked for the interior; a fat,

pompous government official was in the *coupé*, the aristocratic part of the vehicle; and I had engaged passage "on high," as the French picturesquely call the little bench atop of the coach behind the driver.

He, a long, lean, cadaverous personage, — as conceited as "whips" are the world over, — took his coffee with the *coupé* passenger, not deigning to notice us more humble ones. As I was climbing up to my place I heard him say to the fat official:

"*Il fait Sirocco.*"

Sirocco! I wonder if the word calls the same picture to your mind it did to mine — a hot, withering wind blowing up from the oven of the Sahara, a sun like Daniel's furnace heated seven times, Arabs urging their camels toward some protecting rock, some shelter from the devastating, sand-laden blast. This is what I prepared for as we rumbled out of town, the bells on our six horses waking all the dogs to a tumultuous protest.

But there seemed to be hardly any wind at all — just a gentle breath from the south, a pungent whiff from the orange orchards laden

with their fragrant yellow fruit. The air was as soft as the cheek of one of Memling's virgins. It was appallingly dark, too dark to get any idea of the clouds that hid the stars. I felt a sensuous depression, a doleful lassitude, a sort of heavy breathlessness, which I attributed to sleepiness and the unholy hour I had left my bed.

In the utter darkness, a lantern, which shone out suddenly on the road before us, almost hurt my eyes. The brake tightened with a lugubrious screech; with a groan and jolt the *diligence* stopped. There were two people in the road, a man and a woman. The woman climbed up "on high" beside me. She seemed to be a friend of the driver, for he asked her how her brother was getting along. And when she answered, her voice sounded young and fresh. Once more the horses started; the jingle of their bells, the clatter of their feet, made further conversation impossible. The feeble glow of the lantern was soon lost, and we were in the dark again. I could faintly distinguish the tossing bodies of the two white horses in our team, but the woman beside me, two feet away, was utterly invisible.

I developed a weird interest in my neighbor. What did she look like? Was her face as sweet and fresh as her voice? One little sentence of hers, that her brother was doing well, thank you, sir, was all I knew about her.

I could guess that she was somewhere between fourteen and thirty. But a French countrywoman of fourteen is as scrawny and awkward as a calf. Often at thirty they are worn and wrinkled. This was not very satisfactory. Was she married? What color was her hair? A thousand and one impatient questions raced through my brain.

I felt strangely indignant — at whom I wasn't quite sure; but it seemed unfair. I felt that I was being cheated, defrauded. I figured out that it would be more than an hour before the light would be strong enough to get a good look at her. That was altogether too long to wait. I stealthily took out my cigarette-case, not because I wanted to smoke, but because I wanted to light a match. I did it very cautiously, as though I was committing a crime. I seemed to be struggling against some strange inhibition. Most women like to be looked at, and why I

should feel this way I did not know. But the slightest things seemed to take on momentous proportions. I do not know whether she read my intention and considered it an impertinence, or whether it was just a chance, but for the moment, while the feeble flame shone out, her face was turned away. My cigarette was hopelessly lit. I tried to let it go out, so I could light another match, but it burned stubbornly. All I had caught was a faint glimpse of the back of her head. Her hair was dark brown or black. This made things worse than ever, as I do not like black hair — not the shiny, blue-black kind. And it seemed desperately important to assure myself that it was brown. But how to do it? There was a little comfort in the fact that her hair seemed to have been done up with care and neatness. Once she moved a little and her foot touched mine.

"*Pardon, Madame,*" I said, hoping to get a reply. But there was none.

Why was I so exercised about this woman? I could not explain it to myself. It is not customary for me to get so excited about a strange woman I haven't even seen. I told myself

volubly that I was a fool. I agreed with myself on this point — but it did no good. This woman in the dark corner beside me had cast a spell over me. I was utterly, wretchedly restless. It took all the self-control I possess not to reach out and touch her. Was she still there, or only an hallucination? I almost prayed for the dawn. I felt that I could not answer for myself much longer. Suddenly, off somewhere in the blackness, a jackal began to wail. It startled me. For a moment I thought it was my own voice.

Strange exotic odors infested the air; at first I had thought them delicious. I began to wonder what she was thinking about. Did she realize the strange emotions she had stirred in me? Why didn't she move, or cough, or sneeze, or give some sign of life? My eyes ached with the strain of trying to penetrate the darkness. Would she answer if I spoke to her? Would she scream if I touched her? I only wanted to be sure she was still there. My cigarette had burned out, but some strange paralysis kept me from lighting another match.

We rumbled into a village. The dogs barked!

The brake screamed. Jolt! Stop! A light sprang up in a window, and the postmaster, barefooted, his blue trousers pulled hastily over his nightgown, his red official cap on his tousled hair, opened the door. There was a rustle in the darkness at the other end of my seat. I did not realize what was happening until she was halfway down the side. She was getting off! With a mighty effort I stifled a cry of rage and protest.

"*Bonjour, Monsieur,*" she said to the postmaster.

"*Bonjour, Simone,*" he said.

The driver had climbed down with the mail-bag.

"*Au revoir, Monsieur!*" she said to him in her fresh young voice, and then disappeared into the night.

For a moment she had stood, her back to me, silhouetted against the yellow glow of the doorway. Then she had gone. Irresistibly I was moved to follow her. I started to climb down, but the driver already had his foot on the wheel ready to climb up.

"No time to alight, Monsieur," he said, gruffly.



Photograph by Geo. E. Holt, Tangier.

A NATIVE TOWN



I began to hate him. Then he lit a lantern to sort out the letters he had received. I hated him all the more. Why hadn't he done that before "Simone" left? Then I might have had a good look at her. "Simone!" The postmaster would not have called her by her first name if she had been married. And that momentary glimpse of her against the light had revealed a soft, rounded figure — she was at least eighteen. I was convinced that she was beautiful.

I sank back on my seat miserably depressed as we rumbled along. It was an appalling tragedy — this unexpected descent of hers before the dawn had revealed her. "Simone, Simone!" The name became a monotonous, unchanging refrain. I was oppressed by the conviction that Simone could have made me happy. And, now that she had passed away into the night, the future stretched before me into an eternity of loveless loneliness. Simone took on all the rare traits of the wife of my imagination. But somehow the idea of refinding her never occurred to me. She was utterly, eternally, fatally lost. Allah, il Allah! I hardly

cursed myself for not having been bolder while she was there. It had been fated so. The gods had willed that I should have this fleeting comprehension of the Promised Land only to make my eternal exile more bitter.

Gradually I realized that the day was coming. It seemed as dark as ever, but the blackness was broken by a ragged, uneven line — the mountain horizon. The ghastly wailing of the jackal ceased. And one after another the dawn-birds began their chorus. But there was no hearty joyousness about it. They sang because it was their habit to sing at this hour. The realization that at last the day was coming made me more sulky than ever. Too late! Too late! And as the light grew clearer my evil mood intensified. It seemed a sacrilege for the sun to light up the corner where Simone had sat, to exhibit all the dust and dirt, the grimy, horsy old blanket she had wrapped about her feet.

And then my pity for myself changed into pity for Simone. Poor girl! She had to live — probably had lived all her life — in this doleful country. Every day she must see these same dingy red and yellow hills, the same

scrawny gray olive trees — how mournful, how funereal they looked! And every morning she must listen to the insane, maddening, incongruous song of the larks! How sick one must get of the heavy scents that made the air so oppressive!

Then I pitied the horses, poor bony old things! How appallingly empty their life was, trotting along day after day over the same dismal road! I pitied some Arabs working in the fields — slaving away for the benefit of their French conquerors. I cannot begin to recall all the things I pitied as the morning wore painfully away. This certainly was the worst possible world, and Schopenhauer had only vaguely sensed the full significance of his famous phrase. And most poignant of all the overpowering pessimism was the thought of the lost Simone. I could almost see Poe's Raven sitting there in her corner, croaking "Never more!"

As noon approached, the heat became deathly. The jaded horses were painfully climbing up a long ascent. I had almost dropped asleep, lazily dreaming of the happiness which had so cruelly escaped me, when all of a sudden the six

horses broke into a glad whinny, and tossed their heads until the bells on their collars rang out as jollily as those of Santa Claus' reindeer. The back of the driver in front of me straightened up with a snap, he stretched himself vigorously, let out a mighty sigh, and turned to me with a friendly grin.

"Ah!" he cried jovially, slapping his knee. "That's better, isn't it?"

"What?" I asked; "what is it?"

"Why, the wind has changed," he said; "you can breathe now."

Sure enough! I opened my mouth and drank in great gulps of the new north air, cool and keen from the sea. It was an intoxication. Never have I seen such a transformation. The yellow hills became golden, the red cliffs took on a dazzling glory, the young grain in the fields waved under the refreshing breeze with a new and inspiring green. The ruck of heavy black clouds, which the sun at the zenith had driven down to the horizon, broke up into delightful little fragments which changed from their leaden tint to white, then softly faded away into the turquoise of the sky. The glare of the sun lost



its metallic hardness. All that was oppressive and infectious was blown out of the air, and there was left only a rich Arabian Nights perfume, like the incense which lovers used to burn at some long-forgotten shrine in the Vale of Tempe, like the fragrance of the Oriental ointment with which Mary bathed her Master's feet. The birds began to sing again as though it were a new dawn.

In a field at the left-hand side of the road a white-robed Arab had left his plow and was praying.

"*Voilà!*" exclaimed the driver, pointing at him with his whip — "Thanking Allah that the sirocco is over."

"Sirocco," I repeated mechanically.

"Yes," he said, looking at me curiously. "Sirocco. Perhaps you're a stranger and don't know the sirocco?"

"Yes," I said, "I'm new to Algeria."

"It's a funny thing," he said, philosophically knocking a fly off the flank of one of the leaders with the lash of his long, supple whip. "You never can know what you're going to do when the sirocco strikes you. Why, last month in Trois

Oliviers they had a man up for trial for killing his wife. He had chopped her all to pieces. And when he came into court all the defence he had was that the sirocco was blowing. And the jury acquitted him. They did just right, too. For a man isn't to blame no matter how his head turns when the sirocco hits him."

I began to laugh. Poor Simone! I would have liked to tell the driver about her, but I was afraid he might not understand. Of course her finger nails are dirty — probably she snores when she sleeps!

Once more we stopped in a village for mail. What a fascinating medley! Two formidably armed but amiable-looking gendarmes; a cavalry officer with delightfully red *culottes;* a prosperous-looking French colonist, his limp tam-o'-shanter marking him from the Midi, Narbonne perhaps, or even nearer the Pyrenees; a group of Spanish workmen in gorgeous red sashes and baggy corduroy trousers. A dozen stolid Arabs sat on their heels lined against the post-office. They looked on unmoved at all the bustle. And a little way off, at the well, a group of veiled women were filling their pigskins

with water. Dirt? Yes, there was dirt. But charming dirt, like Italy.

Fresh horses carried us quickly to the top of the pass, and there below us was the wide purple stretch of the sea. I whistled merrily all the way down the gorge to Ténès. A gorge as highly colored as the Grand Cañon, and, withal, much more warm and intimate. The road twists frantically, now giving you a glimpse of the sea, then squeezing itself in between gorgeous overhanging cliffs. And at last you swing round a great knob of orange granite, and the road winds down rapidly past the old Moorish town to the new city and the harbor. And in the cool freshness of the north breeze from the sea I forgot the sirocco, the barren plain, and Simone — almost. Not quite. I have felt a faint curiosity to know what she was thinking about back there in the darkness. Did the hot, mystic breath of the Southland disquiet her too, or was she thinking of her pigs and poultry?

KÖBR ROUMÏAT, ALGERIA, 1908.

III. BEDOUINS

THURSDAY afternoon I was straining away at the table in my little square white-washed room at Geld-el-Haba, trying desperately to make my "low comedian" at least comical. It was a thankless job. I had the "blues," or rather the "grays." "Blues" are a city disease; in the country one gets "gray." And a little red-winged bird perched on a branch of the almond tree just outside my window and distracted my attention. Out beyond him was the blue sea, and beyond the sea were all the people I wanted to talk with — all the things I wanted to do.

And when I picked up my pen and turned to my work again, the sun had slipped round in the sky till it shone dazzlingly, blindingly, on my paper. The little red-winged imp jeered at my discomfort. It was not to be borne. I folded up the papers and dashed out into the kitchen. Good Mme. Gardet was scrubbing away at an invisible spot on her shining milk-pan.

"I'm going off on an excursion, back in the hills," I said.

"Will you be back in time for supper?" she asked.

"No," I replied; "I won't be back for two or three days."

Mme. Gardet tried not to look surprised. She thinks it is bad form. I am an American, and only *le bon Dieu* knows what an American will do next.

"Where will you sleep?" she asked.

"Haven't got any plans," I said. "Perhaps under an ilex tree."

"Why, there aren't any ilex trees in this part of the country!" she exclaimed.

"Well, a banyan tree, then."

"I never heard of such a tree."

"Oh, I'm not particular. Any old tree will do in a pinch."

"What will you eat?"

"Hadn't thought about it. If I can't find some locusts and wild honey, I'll borrow some *kous-kous-soo* from an Arab."

"But you don't talk Arabic!" she protested.

Mme. Gardet does not realize the possibilities

of sign language. She was too disconcerted to do anything but shake her head at first. But before I had got the saddle on Citron, my yellow mare, she recovered her sense and began to bother me. First it was my rain-coat, then some cakes of Swiss chocolate and a bunch of dates. Did I have plenty of tobacco and matches? This was the sanest idea that struck her. Wouldn't I wait till she cooked me some hard-boiled eggs? No, I was impatient to get started. At last I got up anchor, with a full cargo of tobacco, chocolate, bread, cartridges, my revolver and field-glass.

"Why didn't you tell me yesterday?" she cried after me.

Just outside of the gate I saw M. Gardet and one of his workmen coming down the road. They beckoned to me, but I pretended not to see them, and turned out across the field. I did not want any more arguments.

Once out on the road, I leaned forward and whistled in Citron's ear. She kicked up her hind legs coquettishly and then stretched out for a run. There is nothing either of us like better. When there is a crick in your back, a cramp in

your hand, a knot in your brain from much writing, nothing untangles it all like a dead gallop. And Citron takes her afternoon run with just the same exquisite enthusiasm that a Parisian brings to his absinthe. It gives her an appetite.

The "*route nationale de la littorale!*" A long straight road of hard red clay. The sea pounding away on the rocks at the left — a coast which recalls the Isles of Jersey, only the blue of the Mediterranean is two octaves bluer than the Atlantic.

To the right the "bush," and half a mile inland the outposts of the Atlas Mountains. From the summits of those hills you can see the snow peaks to the south, on the edge of the Great Desert. In the "bush" there is a myriad of strange blossoms. The road is lined with pale, very fragrant violets. Then there is a shrub, snow-white with a cloud of minute little blooms, whose breath is a pungent fragrance, as tangible to the nose as a mist is to the eyes. And higher up on the hills — most glorious of all — are blotches of honey yellow, which turn to flaming orange at twilight. I think it is the

eucalyptus. If not, it ought to be, for the heavy festoons of blossoms look as bewitching as eucalyptus sounds.

And Citron's iron-shod hoofs beat a rap-a-tap-tap obligato to the booming bass of the sea. A galloping horse is always a joyous thing, but never so much so as when you yourself are astride of it — making part of the free dashing rhythm.

It does not take Citron long to get over a mile, when her mind is set on it. And before many minutes the heavy stable air had been cleansed from her lungs, the fumes of dead pipes had been blown from my brain.

"Citron," I said, "we take the first foot-path into the 'bush.' And may the kind Goddess lady who controls our fate lead us to some brave adventure."

Citron whinnied her approval and dropped into a walk. Soon there was a break in the dense verdure, a foot-path leading off towards the hills. We turned in. It was like a miniature cañon, cut down through a solid block of green. I could seldom see more than two or three feet through the tangle on either side;



Photograph by Lehnert & Landrock, Tunis.

EVENING PRAYER



and before us the path, full of delightful possibilities, twisted and turned continually. At times we would come suddenly upon a gnarled, twisted wild olive tree, or one of the heavy scented shrubs of dazzling white. Once we encountered a scrawny jackal, but he disappeared before I could get out my revolver.

Then suddenly the bush stopped, and we were out on a little prairie. At one end of the open space an Arab was scratching the earth with a crooked stick; hitched to his primitive plow were an ass and a wife. They all — the the man, the ass and the woman — stared at us vacantly as we passed.

Down from the hills, beyond the little prairie, came a breeze laden with the resinous scent of the pine trees. Pretty poor specimens, these African pine trees; none of the gigantic impressiveness of our forests; but they make up in density what they lack in height and dignity. As the path began to mount, it was ever a problem to keep ahorse, and avoid the fate of Absalom.

After half an hour of this tangle we came out on a shoulder of rock, breaking down by a preci-

pice to a little brook two hundred feet below. Very softly its laughter came up to us. I could not see the water, but I could trace the course of the stream, by the richer green along its banks, all the two miles to the sea. Beyond, the hills rose more gradually, and at half our height bent back into a broad, rich plateau.

Near the centre was a native hut — a *gourbi*. It is a queer sort of dwelling. Not so fragile as a tent and much more convenient, because you do not have to bother about it when you move. The walls are made of straw matting, coated with mud, which the sun bakes into a solid brick. The roof is of thatch, a hoary gray where the sun has scorched it.

Around the hut the land was divided into a Chinese puzzle of fantastically shaped lots. Some were green with the fresh winter oats; in others the bare ground was a dull gray. An Arab was at work in one field — immediately behind his plow the earth was a rich black. He beat his asses unmercifully, and an occasional guttural word would come across the ravine — probably a curse.

Every Arab *gourbi* is surrounded by a high

hedge of withered brushwood. It is difficult to get a look at their home life. But I was so high above that the view was unobstructed. I dismounted, loosened the girth to let Citron breathe after her climb, and took out my field-glasses. By the door of the *gourbi* an old, wrinkled woman was laboriously turning a primitive hand-mill. About her was a medley of chickens, dogs and more or less naked children. A young woman came out from the hut. She was barefooted, and wore baggy white zouave trousers and a flaming red bodice, which seemed to be of silk. Her neck and arms were covered with silver trinkets. She had evidently been asleep, for she rubbed her eyes with her left fist and waved her right arm about in a luxurious stretch. She stood out clear-cut against the lens before my eyes. I even caught the glint of her white teeth as she yawned.

It made me feel sleepy, so I tightened Citron's girth, and we pushed on up the trail. The sun was setting, as we topped the pass and started down into the plain. It stretched away before us to the south till it was broken by the snowy mountains which restrain the Southern Desert. The

lowering sun lit up the white peaks, and the higher summits held a roseate opal glow long after the sun had left us on the plains.

At the foot of our descent the path crossed a rough farm road which skirts the southern side of these hills. A few kilometers to the left, I could see the roofs of a farm. The French colonists are invariably hospitable. A picture flashed before me of an ill-lit, smoky, smelly kitchen, a greasy oilcloth on the table, a great bowl of fat soup, exciting conversation about the last litter of pigs or the infamous tax on wine, and afterwards a lumpy bed.

Overhead the clouds still held faint tints of the orange and red sunset. Mars was twinkling away close to the horizon, dead ahead. The broad open plain stretched out before us, mystic and inviting in the thickening twilight. The flowers of the night were opening and throwing a new — minor — note into the harmony of fragrance. Soon we would have the moon.

"No, no, Citron," I said, "that farmhouse is not for us. Fresh grass for you, a hunk of chocolate for me, and the soft breast of Mother Earth for the both of us."

And we pushed across the road out along the trail towards Mars. Some kind of a night insect was chirping away merrily. And innumerable little bats were darting about after the heavy-winged night moths.

There is something wonderfully exhilarating in the night on an open plain. Solitude in a forest — especially at night — oppresses me. I feel dwarfed by the great towering trees, dwarfed and impotent. But in a treeless plain my spirit takes on gigantic proportions. Nothing towers above me to check my pride.

> "Out of the night that covers me,
> Black as the pit from pole to pole,
> I praise whatever gods may be
> For my unconquerable soul."

The poem of Henley's seems the bitterest kind of mockery to me in a city. I am sure I would not dare to repeat it in a forest. But out there in the dark of the open plain, jogging along on the back of Citron, my mare, I declaimed it at the top of my voice — and almost believed it.

Simultaneously, a little after seven, Mars set and the moon rose. A new, weird light fell over the plain. The pride of the myriad stars

— a moment before so brilliant — was humbled. The moon-glow silvered and softened everything. I was startled out of the joy of it by some great black indefinite shapes which rose suddenly before us. I stopped Citron with a jolt. What were they? Not farm buildings, not *gourbis* — this much I was sure! But what? We advanced at a walk. Suddenly the mystic silence was torn to shreds by the violent barking of Arab dogs. We trotted on, reassured. As we approached the forms took shape. They were tents; great, rambling, horsehair Bedouin tents. I had been told that sometimes these desert folk push north of the mountains to find pasturage for their flocks, but I had never seen them before.

Just as we had recovered our confidence and were trotting along briskly, we were startled again. Citron nearly jumped out of her skin, and I must confess to a spinal chill myself. It was a camel! It had been lying down and suddenly decided to get up. Abruptly a black shape — which we had taken for a cactus bush — shook itself and groaned. It would have been bad enough if it had gotten up all at

once, but it got up by stages. At the end of each stage it seemed to be through. But no! There was another lurch, and up it went a little higher. It was a great relief when it finally did stop.

There were four tents, and five Arabs came out to meet me. Their white *burnouses* shone ghostly in the weird glow of the moon. I don't know a word of Arabic — not even "yes" and "no." But I do know "The Sign of Peace." You put your open hand on your breast and slowly turn it until the palm is toward your friend. As there were five of them I made "The Sign" five times. They all repeated it after me. An old white-haired chap with an Old Testament beard said something to me with the lower end of his throat. I shook my head and did "The Sign" over again. They all repeated it once more and said something in chorus. This I guessed to be a hospitable invitation, so I nodded my head. The youngest of them, a lad of sixteen, who looked just as I have always pictured the boy David going out to slay Goliath, took the bridle of my horse and led us carefully through the maze of camel saddles, tent ropes

and barking dogs to the centre of the encampment. He helped me off with the saddle and bridle, but was much too well-bred to show any interest in my European equipments — although they must have been very strange to him. A veiled woman emerged from the darkness and led Citron off behind the tents; a whinny of welcome from several horses greeted her. The old patriarch led me over to the door of his tent, before a blazing fire. Another veiled woman brought out a little grass mat and laid it beside his. All I could see of her were her hands; they looked young and were elaborately tattooed. Many silver bracelets and ankle-rings jingled at every movement. Evidently she was his favorite wife.

Abraham and I sat down. We stared at each other solemnly for several minutes, and then once more he made some audible contortions with the lower end of his throat. I smiled as agreeably as I could, and tried to look as though I believed him. But he seemed discouraged, and conversation flagged until I offered him a cigarette. He accepted graciously, and seemed interested in my silver cigarette-case. The

other men were standing up in a line watching us. I made a motion inviting them to sit down and be sociable. This seemed to be some kind of a breach of Arab etiquette, as they all looked surprised. But, after talking it over for a few minutes, they accepted my suggestion and called to their women, who brought them mats. The young woman with many bracelets appeared with a bowl of *kous-kous-soo*. It is a sort of Arabian breakfast food which serves for all meals. The others had eaten. But they stared at me hospitably — rather oppressively — while I emptied the bowl. Then I opened my saddle-bags and took out a cake of sweet chocolate. They watched me intently as I stripped off the wrappings. The tinfoil layer especially caught their eye. I handed the entire cake to the Sheik. He looked it over carefully, then passed it to the man at his side. One after another examined it, and at last young David gave it back to me uninjured. I broke it up into little pieces and gave one to each of them. Then I began to eat some. In dead silence they turned to watch the Sheik. He weighed his piece on his open hand a couple

of times, smelled it suspiciously, then looked at me. I smacked my lips and made "The Sign of Peace" to reassure him. He solemnly took a discreet little nibble. Instantly they all took a bite. Then the silence was broken; they all jabbered away excitedly. When I passed it round again they helped themselves eagerly. I had made good. I noticed that the Sheik took two pieces, and hid one in the folds of his burnous.

"For the girl with many bracelets," I said to myself.

The woman who had taken my horse brought out a tray covered with tiny brass cups of sweet Moorish coffee. Then the men got up and saluted me solemnly. The Sheik raised the curtain before his tent and motioned me to enter. I dragged in my saddle for a pillow, and my blankets. Two-thirds of the interior — the women's apartment — was shut off by a thin white curtain. I wrapped my blankets about me and lay down.

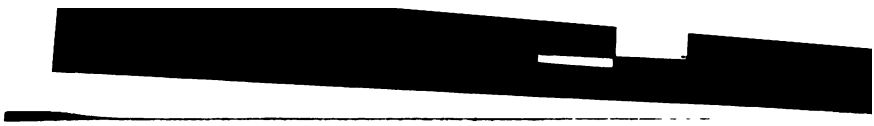
"Good-night," I said.

The old man seemed to understand, for he bowed profoundly and disappeared into the holy of holies.



Photograph by Geo. E. Holt, Tangier.

A DAUGHTER OF THE SPHINX



Outside the embers of the fire still glowed. The pallor of the moon lay on everything like a veneer of witchery. Within, for a long time, there was a murmur of guttural voices, and once in a while a happy little laugh. I guess that Allola, or Fatima, or whatever her name was, liked the chocolate. Fantastic shadows jumped and twisted on the thin white curtain. I think she danced for him in payment for the strange sweetmeat. At last the light went out and the conversation stopped. Everything was still except for the crying of a baby in another tent, the occasional contented snore of a camel, while, way off somewhere in the foot-hills, a hyena laughed.

For a long time I lay awake thinking about these strange people. The French colonists live among them, employ them as workmen and servants, as nurses even for their children, but know less about them and the inside of their lives than we Americans do about Kalmucks. Side by side the two races exist, mingling in some outward ways, even crossing breeds at times, but basically, psychologically, there has been no approach.

"They lie," my host said to me one day in the field when I asked him why one of his workmen wore green braids on his turban. "If I asked him, he would undoubtedly lie about it."

I told him that in Persia only those who have made the pilgrimage to Mecca wear the sacred green on their turbans.

"Mohammed!" my host called. The tall, dignified native left his plow and came over to us.

"Have you been to Mecca?" M. Gardet asked in Arabic.

"No, *Sidi*," the Arab said, and went back to work.

"He says 'No,'" M. Gardet translated to me. "But like as not he has been there six times. If they would always lie, you could understand them. But sometimes they tell the truth. Perhaps he hasn't been there. If I should ask six of my workmen about it, three would say that Mohammed had been to Mecca, three would say he hadn't."

So I stopped asking my host questions about the Arabs. But in all the time I have been in

Algeria I have never found a Frenchman who felt differently about it. Guy de Maupassant, whose eyes pierced so deeply through the lies of French life, could not fathom the Arabs. "They are incomprehensible," he writes; "they lie."

I remember that once more the hyena laughed cynically, a dog barked back defiance, and then sleep came.

In the morning there was *kous-kous-soo* again and the sweet black coffee. I left them before the sun was up, in the early gray of the dawn. I was sure they wouldn't be so fascinating by daylight.

KÖBR ROUMÍAT, 1908.



IV. SPANIARDS

IN our clear-aired Western country, things which are very far off look near at hand. It is just the reverse here. We — Citron and I — had trotted along only a few minutes, when I turned back in the saddle to wave a last salute to my Bedouin friends. It was as though I was looking through the wrong end of my field-glasses. The group of dirt-colored tents had sunk into an indefinite blur. Among the moving specks of white I could no longer distinguish the men from the women. It was a mirage turned inside out.

Off to the south, ahead of us, were the great mountains; their snow peaks had already caught the sun. I knew, from a previous look at a map, that this valley could not be very wide, but it looked as spacious as the sea or sky. Scattered cactus plants tried valiantly, and failed, to break the monotony of the dim stretch about us. And yet there was a charm in this very monotony which tempted me to leave

the path and penetrate it — I do not think you can "penetrate" a "monotony" without offence to the king's English. But that is as near as I could come to a precise formalization of a very vague desire. Off there in the indefiniteness there would be no men. That was it. It would be an escape!

To meet a human being is a nerve-straining experience, potentially the supremest adventure. Lions and tigers can only kill you. But a human being — every one of them that comes up over your horizon — holds more appalling, more awe-full possibilities. Perhaps he will only stare at you insolently and pass by. Perhaps he will shake your hand formally and say he was glad he met you and then pass by. Perhaps he will put his hand on your shoulder and call you "Friend," or — just as likely — he may grasp viciously at your throat. He may let fall some word of love or hate which will live within you, change all life's landscape for you, dominate you. Very rarely — and there is the gambling, the exciting element of a meeting — very rarely does the adventure become desperate or intense; but there is always that possibility.

I know a man, — he was in college with me, — a light-hearted, merry, hopeful chap. He was climbing up rapidly towards his success. All the world was smiling on him, till one day as he was coming out of Café Martin, on Broadway — it was midafternoon and a bright sun was shining — a Salvation Army lassie asked him suddenly if he was prepared to meet his God. Something in the tone of her voice frightened my friend, frightened all the joy of living out of him, filled his waking hours with screaming fear of divine wrath, filled his sleep with agonized dreams of a sulphur hell. The last time I saw him was down on the river-front — unshaven and soiled he was — preaching his gospel of fear to a dull-eyed crowd of hungry, workless men. Such conversions are frequent — one way or the other. Some one — some one whom we haven't known twenty-four hours — laughs at a scruple, and this scruple, which has long served as a moral guide-post, is blown away. For better or worse, we are jerked out of the rut. And we must laboriously set to work to find our particular North Star, to orient ourselves again. Naturally, inevitably,

men are conservatives, and we dislike to change — above all to be changed. When we stop to think of this risk, it is appalling! But it is so continual that, like a steeplejack, we get hardened to the danger. But, like him again, the vertigo strikes us at times, and we crave solitude as he craves solid earth. And it was this vertigo which made me jerk Citron's head around to the right and set her galloping her hardest away — away — without any goal — only a point of departure — Humanity.

The foot-hills, which I had crossed the afternoon before, were now at my right. Their apparent remoteness startled me. I knew they could be only a few hours away, but they looked many days' journey. Gradually the sun crept down the mountain-sides, and suddenly, like a blow, I felt it on my back. All the indefinite grays in the great expanse broke into colors. The cactus became deliciously green. A few sand-dunes — strayed, like my Bedouins, north of the mountain frontier of their country — changed from a lifeless gray to dazzling heaps of gold, streaked with broad veins of purplish red. One last straying dawn-cloud near the western

horizon exploded; as utterly, as suddenly, it disappeared as a bursting soap-bubble. For a moment the irregular sky space where it had been looked bluer than the rest. But gradually the eyes recovered from their surprise, the illusion passed, there was no more trace of where the cloud had been. And it was the last; no faintest suggestion of mist stained the blue.

The red streaks on the lonely sand-dunes mingled with gold as we passed them, changing all to a rich warm orange. For an hour or more no sign of human life disturbed the solitude. And when at last the nothingness was broken, it was not by life, but by death. Far away in the plain arose an Arab tomb, a bleak, bare cube of whitewashed stone. With my glasses I could make out the ruin of an olive tree, a thick, crooked trunk, a few scrawny, leafless branches. It was very old. Some time, many, many years ago, the Faithful had built this tomb to some holy *Marabout*, and had planted the olive tree. And like the corpse at its root, like the people who had put it there, it had lived its life and died. A dead sentinel of death. I had es-

caped those who live to encounter those who are dead.

The heat of the sun increased with painful rapidity. I began to get thirsty, and I could tell that Citron was suffering too. She is a sea-side creature, not used to this dry, flaming heat. I turned her head to the tomb in the faint hope of finding water there. But there was none. The bones within the tomb could not be dryer than the land about it. Citron stood dolefully, her head hanging low between her fore feet. Never have I seen death so supreme. No live green leaf, no breath save ours. Only the hot white stones and the dull sand.

There was a flashing movement among the loose stones. "Something alive," I said, and jumped off to lift the stone. But such life! It was a scorpion — "death's messenger." It challenged me with its fatal sting.

The Arabs say that anything should be forgiven a woman except ugliness. And if you judge their country by the same standard, there is nothing for which to blame it. When it is most cruelly thirsty, it is beautiful. When the heartless heat seems to dry the life in your veins,

it is still beautiful. Perhaps most alluring of all its beauties are the "fever holes" — stagnant pools in the dry river beds, surrounded by the coolest, freshest vegetation. Coming on one unexpectedly after a sun-scorched day in the desolation, your impulse is to plunge in, to luxuriate in the coolness of the green water, which so wondrously reflects the heavy-colored orchids on the banks — and if you did, you would surely die. Even this venomous, death-laden scorpion had its sinister, fascinating beauty.

But Citron was not interested in death or scorpions. She had lifted her head, and, with wide-stretched nostrils, was looking northward. While I had been pondering things beyond her comprehension, the clouds had come up out of the sea and hung heavy about the foot-hills. It was certainly raining there. Would it come far enough south to reach us? The sun was getting higher and hotter every second. For three or four hours it would be unbearable, and the meagre shade which the tomb offered us was getting rapidly narrower. For an hour at noon there would be none. Then it would

be a question of broiling outside or breaking in the door and disturbing the old *Marabout*. And he had been such a long time dead, it seemed a shame to bother him. I was already tired of standing up. And I did not feel that I would be comfortable sitting down. I am weak on natural history, and I didn't know whether scorpions lived singly or in herds.

How fast nature moves! Almost before I had had time to realize how miserable I was going to be if I had to stay there, the rain struck us — great, round, heavy drops. They kicked up little puffs of dust, like miniature bombshells. After the utter silence, the noise they made on the dry earth and hot stones was fairly bewildering. Citron swished her tail happily as I unstrapped my rain-coat and jumped into the saddle.

I turned her northward toward the hills. Over the other side was the great "*Route Nationale*," along the coast. If we made that by nightfall, the rest would be simple and we would sleep at home. Vaguely ahead of us was the ragged line of the foot-hills, above them the sky showed a few shades lighter.

But the fall of the rain was so thick that nothing else was distinguishable.

The nearer we came to the hills the harder it rained. It was noon when we reached the farm road which skirts the southern side of the hills — the road we had crossed the evening before. And beyond we found a wild olive tree which gave us a little shelter. Citron made a meal off the grass, and I munched a cake of sweet chocolate. I smoked industriously, trying not to be impatient.

Every mile or so there is an Arab trail over the hills. But they are so faint that it is often hard to follow them in good weather. The fall of the rain was so blinding that it was almost hopeless to try it now. Most of these trails follow the bed of some ravine, and now they would be lost under frantic mountain torrents. These African streams are not like the poetic Brook, they do not go on forever. Quite the contrary; they go very seldom. But when they do, they make up for lost time.

Towards the middle of the afternoon I could stand that dripping olive tree no longer. We sallied out along the farm road, turning off



Photograph by Lehnert & Landrock, Tunis.

THE TOMB OF A SAINT

every time a path seemed to lead into the hills. Three times we went astray and had to scramble back to the road before I gave it up. The only thing to do was to push along the road till we came to shelter. Sooner or later there must be a farm. It might be twenty miles or twenty feet. The mud was getting awful; what little sunlight had struggled through the torrent of rain had left us. How soon?

It was not soon. For an hour or more we pushed along the road. Hope had almost died, and nothing was left but a dumb conviction that it would be just as bad to stand still as to struggle on. At last a dog barked cheerfully. He didn't mean it to sound cheerful — just the opposite. But cheer, like happiness and virtue, is relative. Above the deafening swish of the rain, above the sob of Citron's hoofs as she pulled them out of the sticky mud, out of the inky night, that inhospitable snarl sounded cheerful. The white walls of a house suddenly jumped out of the darkness. I called lustily, and the door opened, letting out a flood of yellow candlelight. In the doorway appeared what looked like a comic-opera brigand — a

gaudy red sash, baggy trousers, oily black hair, and long hang-dog mustachios. His swarthy face and the general cut-throat effect of his make-up marked him for a Spaniard. I asked him in French for shelter. He glared at me uncomprehendingly for a minute, then turned and called, "Carlos!" Another man, only a trifle less dangerous-looking, and very much more dignified, appeared and asked me in beautiful French what I wanted. I told him, although I felt that a man with ordinary intelligence might have guessed. He told me where the stable was and where I could find oats for Citron. It was quite possible that he expected me to sleep in the stable, but I hardly thought he expected me to eat the oats. So, as soon as I had made Citron comfortable, I went back to the house. Inside there was a gang of twenty-odd Spaniards. The house was unfinished; they were building it.

Not one of them greeted me. Around a candle a group were playing cards. The others were finishing a pot of noodle stew — a few forlorn sausages floated about in it. And over all was an incisive smell of garlic. I told Carlos,

the only one who spoke French, that I was hungry. He didn't seem especially interested, but he pointed to a pile of dirty plates in the corner, and went on with his game of cards. I took one of the plates and dug into the stew. The rest of them were drinking wine, but no one offered me any. I tried to make friends with Don Carlos by offering him a cigarette. He apologized to me in classic French for having some cigarettes of his own which he would doubtless prefer to mine. He said it in just the same manner in which a discreet person would refuse a chocolate cream offered by Lucretia Borgia.

I hung my wet clothes before the fire and lay down in a corner. At last the card-players stopped their game, and one of them began to sing. He had a great, round baritone voice, one of those charming uncultivated peasant voices so common among the Latin peoples. The rest stopped their talk to listen to him. After two or three songs one of the men said something to him, which I guessed to be a request for some special song. They all turned and scowled at me suspiciously. And for a minute there was an ardent discussion of which

I felt myself to be the subject, but I could not imagine the cause.

At last he started a great, swinging, sturdy, hopeful song, the kind of martial music which makes people willing to slap a machine gun in the face. And when he got to the chorus, they all joined in and made the unfinished roof shake. In the last line — a strong shout of fearlessness and determination — I thought I recognized some familiar sounds. I waited for the second verse. Yes, I caught it clearly then — "*Fed-er-a-tif-res-pub-li-co*" — The Federative Republic. I knew them then — My Comrades. The song is the Marseillaise of the Spanish revolutionists.

"*Vive la Rêpublique!*" I cried, springing up.

They looked at me in doubt a moment and then the singer beat his feet on the floor for silence and began singing the "*Carmagnole.*" That was familiar ground for me, and I joined the chorus at the top of my voice.

"Dansons la Carmagnole!
Vive la son! vive la son!
Dansons la Carmagnole!
Vive la son du canon!"

For the first time, I got a friendly smile from them. Carlos came over to my corner to talk to me. I soon convinced him that I was a revolutionist also. They were all of them refugees. Alphonso and his priests rule with as brutal a despotism as Nicolas and his police. Carlos had been sent to prison first while he was a professor in the University. Later he had been arrested again for writing in a liberal anti-clerical newspaper. He had escaped to Algeria. The rest were simple workmen — trade unionists and Republicans. For various acts of civic virtue they had been compelled to fly and seek refuge here.

It called sharply to my mind another night spent with revolutionists, two years before, during the insurrection at Moscow. There, instead of these lithe, swarthy Spaniards, the comrades had been gigantic blond Slavs. And instead of this warm southern rain, a bitter Russian snowstorm had been blowing outside. But we had sung the same songs. And the light in the eyes had been the same.

I told Carlos about it. Every few minutes he would turn and translate to the others who

had crowded about us. They all knew of the Russian struggle and were keenly interested in it. So, instead of sleeping, we sat up all the long night through, exchanging news of the Revolution. I told them of the warm new life which is so surely coming into being amid the northern snows. They told me stories of the cold heartlessness of the rulers in their warm, sunny home.

And when the morning came, in spite of my protests they selected one of their number to guide me over the hills to the *Route Nationale.*

"The rest of us," Carlos said, "we can work a little harder and make up for his absence."

It was well he came; without his guidance I might not have safely crossed all those mountain torrents which the sudden rain had called to life. He did not know any French, I no Spanish, so our trip was silent. At noon, when we parted, he shook my hand warmly. All he could say was:

"*Vive la Révolution!*"

"*Si, si, camarado!*" I said. "*Vive la Révolution!*"

We shook hands once more, and he turned

back into the forest, to build houses for the French — until the time comes to go home and strike another blow.

I had never realized before the universality of this ferment we call "Revolution." At home, yes, in Russia, in Germany, in Italy, all European countries, even in Turkey, I am accustomed to finding peoples whose eyes light up, who grip my hand a little harder, at the word "Comrade." But here in Africa, the forgotten continent — on the edge of the Sahara!

Il marche! Toujours! Partout!

KÖBR ROUMÍAT, 1908.



V. ARABS

THE first day at Geld-el-Haba I was out of bed and down on the beach by sun-up. For half a mile along the coast runs a strange formation. A hundred-foot cliff down to the water, and then a sort of shelf, fifty yards across and just an inch or two above the level of the sea. It is cut by deep, narrow chasms, always full of water, and when the wind is up the waves run over all of it. But this first morning there was hardly a breath of air, and I could clamber all over the ledge. The water here is as clear as at Bermuda. I could see way down into the crevices between the rocks and watch all the teeming, fantastic sealife; delicately colored anemones, a rose-tinted, fan-shaped sponge, and great purple sea-shrubs, which waved their branches continually, as though some strong wind was blowing down there. But what interested me most were the fishes. Ten years ago I was a mighty fisher. And there was something down there which looked like a hothouse

variety of sea-bass. In the early morning hour they were feeding. Suddenly a flash of silver would shoot out from under one of the purple shrubs. Zip! a fin would cut the surface. And then, peacefully digesting his morsel, the fish would sink lazily back to his shelter. There seemed to be myriads of them.

As I said, it is ten years since I did my fishing, but the sight of those darting, silver sea things gave me a new interest in life. Before I ate breakfast I made my host show me his fishing tackle. He brought out a ponderous branch of a tree, some wrapping cord, and an assortment of naked little bent wires. This was not very encouraging. "Still-fishing" bears the same relation to "fly-fishing" that solitaire does to poker. I hurried through breakfast to write to a friend in Paris to send me some real fishing tackle

It was a painfully long time coming, but when it did arrive I began to grow young again. I date my "cure" from that moment. The last thing before going to bed every night I look out at the sea and try to forecast the morning. And at the second cock-crowing I sit up in bed

and take another look through my window. If the waves show white, there is no hope, and back I go to sleep, and am sulky the rest of the day.

I never saw such fishing! It is virgin sea. The fish have a positive preference for artificial flies; they scorn God's handiwork, and of course they are duly punished for it. A grid-iron hell is theirs for the blasphemy.

This morning I reached the rocks before the dawn had begun to break. It was too dark to fish; but I crept out to the very edge of the ledge, and sat down beside a great boulder to wait for the light. I lit my pipe and smoked impatiently. It seemed as though the dawn came up out of the water itself; long before I could notice any increase of light the waves began to change color from the dark, oily olive tint of night to a lighter green, and gradually, just as it began to dawn, to their daytime blue. A long trailing cloud, which stretched clean across the sky like an exaggerated Milky Way, suddenly caught fire at its eastern end. Rapidly the red flame ran along its entire length to the other horizon. Then countless unexpected shadows woke up

on the rocks about me, weird, undefined shapes, which became clear-cut only when the rim of the sun came up over Cap Rouge.

But a swish in the water beside me, as the first fish rose, recalled me to the business in hand. I opened my little tin tackle-box, put the rod together, and just as I was tying on the flies I was disturbed by human voices. I said several things I shouldn't have, and looked up over my rock to motion back the intruders. For a moment I thought I was back in Old Greece, the Old Greece where early morning fishers were often interrupted by the sea-nymphs. But a second glance reassured me — it was only an Arab and his wife hunting crabs.

Their method was typical. He was a sombre old chap, with long, scanty white beard, a soiled *burnous*, and thin, scrawny brown legs. He sat stolidly on a dry rock, a basket under his feet, and — this was the typical part — watched his wife work. I did not blame him for watching. It was a pretty sight. She was a supple young Mauresque, slim and graceful as the water-nymph for whom I had first mistaken her.

She had laid aside her outer cloaklike garment, and was clad only in a light cotton tunic. It was a very simple affair — two small holes for her arms, a bigger one for her head, and a still bigger one at the bottom to get in by. I could make one myself. It was bound about her waist with a heavy dark red woollen sash, the ends of which, hanging down at her side, were adorned with a most amazing collection of colored strings, bright yellow, startling orange, pale blue, and flaming crimson. It sounds discordant, and I must admit that, as it hangs now in my room, it almost makes my head ache. But out there on the red, wet rocks it was toned down by the faint morning light, and mingled charmingly with the greens on the bank and the far-reaching blue of the sea. In her hand was a spear — a stick sharpened in a fire.

If the old gentleman took it sedately and placidly, it was just the reverse with her. She was fairly running over with the joy of life. She would crawl about deftly until she saw a crab, then she would make a long detour to get it between her and the sun, so that her

shadow should not frighten it. When she got within striking distance, she would wave her hand at her husband, as though she thought he could increase the intensity of his silence. With a graceful, dextrous thrust she would stab her game, and, gathering up her scant skirts, she would dash into the water after it. The moment she got her hand on it she would let out a delighted little scream of glee, and go bounding over the rocks to exhibit it to her lord and master. I wanted to wring his scrawny old neck for not being more enthusiastic about it. But he never once lost his *blasé* manner. He would look at the crab a moment critically, then lift up his foot and let her put it in the basket. Not a word would he say. But off she would go again with undimmed ardor. It was a sight for the gods. And for half an hour I forgot all about my fishing-rod.

At last their basket was full, and the old man got up and began to come my way. She picked up her mantle and the basket and followed him. They saw me at the same moment. She gave a startled little squeal and started to retreat; but the old man grunted "*Roumi*," so she stopped.

"*Roumi*," being translated, means "Infidel." It was as though he had said, "Don't get excited; it is only a dog." If I had been a Mussulman, she would have run screaming to the woods, and would have had to do — I don't know what penance — because I had seen her face unveiled. But I was only an infidel dog and didn't count. The old man made the "Sign of Peace," and the two sat down beside me.

I didn't return his salute. I had never felt so entirely, so shamefully insulted in my life. I have always read a deep contempt for me in the eyes of the Mussulmans I have met. The Arab boy who cleans my boots and cares for "Citron," my mare, looks down on me from a perfectly unspeakable height of superiority. The men do not matter, but to be insulted so by a woman, a very pretty woman, made my hair crinkle! I had heard that the Mohammedan women do not veil before the infidels. But I had never realized the overpowering weight of the insult before. She would have been utterly confused if an Arab had seen her face. She sat there before me, almost within reach of my hand, in a thin, short, very short, tunic,

which was wet, and she never turned a hair. I was a "*Roumi*," not a man, a dog! That was all there was to it. I felt that unless I could shake her composure I would explode. I tried to convince her I was a man by staring at her. I might just as well have tried to embarrass the statue of Venus de Milo!

"*Bonjour*," the old man said. He had probably learned French working for a colonist; or perhaps he had served in the Spahis when he was younger. I was too mad to return his greeting.

"Fishing?" he asked.

Such insane questions, when the answer is so evident, generally infuriate me; and I probably would have told him I was skating if I had not been afraid he would get mad and walk off with his wife, and I had not yet given up hope of embarrassing her.

"Yes," I replied. "And you?"

"I've been crab-fishing," he said solemnly, and he showed me his basket. "I'm a good fisher," he added.

I looked at his wife, but she did not seem to see anything funny in his choice of pronouns. I tied another fly on my leader.

"No good," he said. "Use crab meat. Fish don't like feathers."

I made a couple of casts without making a strike. "No good!" he kept repeating. He began to get on my nerves. At last I had better luck and landed a beautiful three-pounder. I dangled it triumphantly before his eyes.

"No good," he said stolidly. "Use crab-meat. Fish don't like feathers."

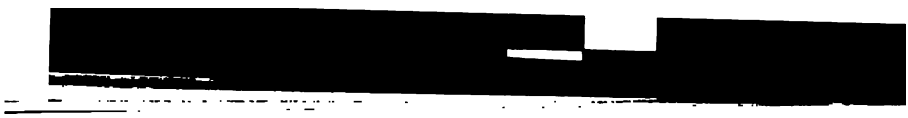
Then I had a run of luck. Almost every cast I got a rise, and soon I had a nice string of eight, all from two to five pounds. I noticed that all the strikes had been on the same fly, so I stopped for a minute to change the other two flies to this variety. I thought that if I should have the luck to raise two at once — as sometimes happens — I might convince him. When I opened the box to get the new flies, both of them came close to look in. In one compartment were some bare hooks on which I had not yet built flies. The old man pounced on them at once.

"There!" he cried. "These are good. Use these with crab meat and you will catch fish!"



Photograph by Lehnert & Landrock, Tunis.

AN ARAB OF PURE STRAIN



I sat back in dumb amazement. Once upon a time, way back in the dimness before history, this chap's ancestors had begun to fish off these rocks with a bent wire and a piece of crab meat. Century after century they had sat there unchanging. Sat there all the day long, and had been lucky to catch half as many fish as I had done in fifteen minutes. And glaring ocular demonstration did not shake his faith in the methods of his ancestors. I began to understand the hopeless discouragement with which my host talks of the "Native Question." The Arabs are starving off because the French have stolen their land. But the fact remains that most of the natives have more land than the colonists. An Arab will starve to death on a piece of land which will support two French families, simply because the Arabs do not know — and will not learn — how to intensify their culture. Somehow — nobody knows just how — the Romans, during the long centuries of their occupation, succeeded in teaching them to put an iron point on the end of the crooked stick with which they scratch the earth. It is the last thing they have learned.

The Arabs employed by my host are good workmen. They seem perfectly intelligent; six days a week they yoke his stout oxen before a great American plow, turn his soil, scatter his fertilizer, after the harvest help him sort out the best grain for the next sowing, and so forth; but the seventh day of the week they hitch their wives beside an ass, and tickle the soil with their iron-pointed stick. "Why should we put on fertilizer?" they ask. "Allah, the Just, will give us the harvest our piety deserves."

My speculations about the fate of the race were interrupted by the voice of the young woman. Her eye had been caught by a gaudy, red-feathered trolling-spoon and its polished brass disk. She pointed to it, and said something in Arabic. The old man shook his head. "No good," he repeated his deadly refrain. "Use these. Crab meat. You will catch fish. Fish don't like feathers."

But I'd lost interest in fishing. I realized that if I pulled up Jonah's whale it would not convince the old man. So I started to put up my things. He handled the bare hooks covetously.

"How much?" he asked.

They were no use to me. I prefer feathers. But I did not feel like being charitable to the stubborn old fool.

"One franc," I said.

"No money," he said. Then, with an inspiration, "Take my crabs. Better than feathers. You could catch many fish."

I told him gruffly that I didn't want his old crabs. Then he offered me his sandals. He said they were good ones, because he had used them already a long time. I did not have any use for his shoes. I might have given him the hooks to get rid of him, if my eye had not fallen on his wife's gorgeous sash.

"There," I said, "I'll give you five for the sash."

"No," he said; "ten."

I only shrugged my shoulders, put the hooks away, and began to fill my pipe.

"Nine," he said.

"Eight."

At last he came down to six. And when I refused six, he became indignant and said that I was worse than a Jew. I felt that this re-

proach was entirely true. I, at least, never saw a Jew so mean. But I had a stubborn desire to "do" this Arab. I got mad again at the thought of his wife's insulting disregard for me. I told him to take off his Mohammedan turban and go to the Christian hell. He got very dignified then and went off. They had no sooner disappeared than I regretted it. The sash was worth a hundred useless fish-hooks. But I could not bring myself to call after them. I felt sure that he would boast to his friends, before his pretty wife, of how he had got the better of this infidel dog.

Down in the water at my feet was a world of strange life, miniature little lobsters, eels, weird, tiny sea-horses. But it did not seem half so strange and incomprehensible to me as this human Arab life above ground.

"*Sidi*," I heard some one calling. "*Sidi*," in a term of respect very different from "*Roumi*." It was the old Arab and his wife, come back to the edge of the rocks.

"*Sidi*," he cried, "Six."

I knew I had him then, and I shook my head nonchalantly. He made a gesture of hopeless

defeat, and they came out across the rocks toward me, the woman unwrapping her sash as she came.

"Six, *Sidi*," he pleaded once more. I was tempted to come down to four, but that would have been too inhuman.

"Five," I said.

"Five," he said. "Give them to me."

They squatted down on the rocks, while I opened the box again. I let him choose the five. While he was deliberately weighing each one — they were machine-made and exact duplicates — I felt the young woman's eyes on me. When I glanced at her, she looked down, and I thought I saw the shadow of a blush on her dark cheeks. Slowly she looked up at me, the corners of her mouth twisted themselves into a coaxing smile. She looked at me doubtfully, and then stretched out her hand slowly, and pointed at the gaudy red trolling-spoon. I pretended not to understand, and, growing bolder, she smiled at me as coquettishly as woman ever smiled at man. No woman ever smiled so at a dog.

"Yo ho!" I cried triumphantly, handing

her the treasure. "So I'm a man after all, am I?"

There was no doubt about the blush then; it was real and unmistakable. The old man looked on impassively as she hung it on the chain about her neck, along with her other trinkets. I hope he will be equally impassive the first time he scratches his hand on the thing.

KÖBR ROUMIAT, 1908.



VI. THE SHAREEF OF MAKAÏNFAÏN

SELDOM have I felt more contented with life than when I drew rein — to breathe my horse — on the summit of one of the Anghera Hills. I was in Morocco. Ten miles behind me I could catch a silver glint from the Bay of Tangier and a glimpse of the white walls of the city. To the north were the Straits, Gibraltar, and the orange-yellow hills of Andalusia. Before me towered the gray flanks of Jibel Musa — the greater of the two Pillars of Hercules. To the south, wave after wave, mystical African hills, growing higher and higher in the distance until, far beyond human vision, they reach up to the snow peaks of the Great Atlas. Overhead — over all — the blue, soft southern sky.

And added to this sensuous content was the knowledge that I was on my way to visit Muley Abd Allah, the Shareef of Makaïnfaïn, the man above all others whom I wished to meet in Morocco.

My Moorish escort made some observations in his guttural Arabic which I judged to mean that time was slipping by. So our little cavalcade started down the slope into another of the innumerable valleys of the Anghera district.

This, in short, is what I knew of my host-to-be. Dissensions broke out among the fifth generation of the descendants of the Prophet. One of them, Idrees, had to fly before the wrath of his brothers. Their hate followed him westward until, at last, he found refuge among the Berber tribes of the Great Atlas, and there founded the first dynasty of Moroccan Sultans. Most of the men who have since ruled the Empire have been, or have claimed to be, Shareefs — true descendants of the Prophet. And of all the Shareefian families, that of Makainfain, sprung from Idrees — although they have never given the country a Sultan — is the most authentic, the richest, and has been the most influential. But Abd Allah, the present head of the house, except as an object of religious veneration, has less influence than a mule-boy or the outcasts who work as servants for the Infidels. He is believed to be — among his

people it is a terrible epithet — "a friend of the French!"

This is the story told me by the friend who had made it possible for me to be the Shareef's guest. Fifty years ago hatred and distrust of the dynasty of Filali Shareefs — the reigning house — had already become widespread. And the Prince of Makaïnfaïn, Musa er-Rahmàn, was dangerously popular. He was so known and loved from one border of the Empire to the other, so respected, that whenever new taxes fell on the people the Filali Sultans were cursed and a universal prayer went up to Allah, the Beneficent, that the House of Makaïnfaïn might reign in their stead.

"Treason!" yelled the Grand Vizier. "Treason!" echoed all the corrupt *bashas* and *kaïds* who were fattening off the people, unrestrained by the debauched, pleasure-loving Filali Sultans. Musa er-Rahmàn, disguised as a beggar, fled to his own people among the Berber Hills of the southeast, on the edge of the Great Desert. And there, in open defiance, his influence grew apace, until the Filali had to destroy him or abdicate. The largest Moor-

ish army since the great days in Spain was sent against him. Musa er-Rahmàn was forced to seek French protection. His new friends made much of him, gave him citizenship and the red button of the Legion of Honor. In exchange they demanded of him — and received it — the allegiance of some of his Berber tribes, so pushing their Algerian frontier westward, opening the door to trade with Timbuctoo, and tying the first knot in the net they have so successfully woven about Morocco.

Musa er-Rahmàn had saved his life by betraying his country. The Filali were satisfied. They had lost an unruly province, which rarely paid taxes, and whose strategical value they failed to realize, and in return were rid of their most dangerous rival. They spread the story of his treason broadcast, with elaborate Oriental exaggerations, until the name of his family became a byword with all patriotic Moors.

Abd Allah, my host, was the son of his old age. Born a French citizen, the treason of his father was his main heritage — he had no choice in the matter. He had been educated in France

at the military school of St. Cyr. He had been given a commission in the army at sixteen. The brand was put on him before he was old enough to know what it meant.

"And Abd Allah himself?" I had asked. "What is his attitude now? Is he pro-French, or patriot?"

And my friend, who knows the Shareef better than any other Christian, shrugged his shoulders.

"God alone knows what he thinks. He is a cynic. He jests about everything. He threw up his commission at eighteen, hung about Paris a couple of years more, until his father died, then went to Morocco. He has only been back here two or three times in the last fifteen years. I think he hates and admires the French, loves and despises his own people. He is a man without a country?"

"Is he active in politics?"

"It is hard to say, but I think not. His principal interest seems to be the history of his people."

Four hours more we jogged up and down the Anghera Hills, my sure-footed native mount

negotiating the river beds, which do service in Morocco for roads, with amazing ease. Then we turned sharply to the north, along a better-marked trail which led down towards the sea. Suddenly my guide gave an ear-piercing cry and pointed to a group of horsemen just coming into sight. It was Muley Abd Allah come out to meet me. The first shock of meeting showed the contrast in the man's life. Dressed entirely after the native fashion, he greeted me in purest French. And when we had finished shaking hands, the Moor who had escorted me kissed his shoulder — a salutation never used by free adults except to a prince of the Holy Blood.

As we rode along the few miles which remained, his Highness began an elaborate apology that he could give me few accustomed comforts.

"Beyond a few books hidden away in a turret," he said, "there is nothing foreign in the house. I am supposed to be Europeanized, but I prefer the ways of mine own people. My manner of life is more Moorish than that of the Moors. There is hardly a *kaïd* in the land who does not boast of a nickel alarm clock. But we

tell the time by the sun, as our fathers did before us."

Before I could convince him that this would only add charm to my visit, we came in sight of what he called his "hermitage." It was an immense white cube of a house. Two high walls ran down from it to the sea, enclosing the women's garden. There were a few detached smaller houses, half a hundred native wattle huts, and a cluster of tents, these last occupied by pilgrims come for a blessing from this descendant of the Prophet.

Mohammedan houses are just the reverse of the "whited sepulchre." Their exterior is seldom attractive. This palace of Makaïnfaïn is sadly in need of new whitewash. Its walls are stained and peeled by rain, spattered with mud and filth. Through a great gate in a blank wall we rode into an outer court. Although the only entrance to the palace, it is in reality a stable-yard. It is surrounded by stalls for horses and quarters for the lesser retainers.

Dismounting, my host led me through a narrow, graceful arch to the inner court. Here were privacy and beauty. About the central

fountain, a square reservoir of running water sunk below the level of the finely tiled court, were grouped ferns and potted palms. On all sides were arcades of delicate Moorish arches, the latticed windows on the farther side indicating the women's quarters.

I was given a pleasant apartment — a long reception room, an inner parlor, and a bedroom opening out on a terrace over the sea. Along the walls of each room were low divans, covered, like the floor, with choice old rugs from the Sous country. There were many cushions, some of the gorgeous, rather flashy embroidery of Rabat, and some of the fine, square stitch of the Fasi women. There was no other furniture except a low round table in each room, half a foot higher than the divans. The walls were tiled halfway up. Above the tiling was chalk-white plaster, except where the primitive lamps had made a smudge. I was left alone for a wash and a rest. About seven I was wakened by the clapping of hands. Muley Abd Allah was waiting for me in my little parlor. Slave boys spread a fine linen cloth over the low table, brought water and towels



Photograph by Lehnert & Landrock, Tunis.

THE ARCADE OF A RICH MAN'S SELEMLIK

for our hands, then *kous-kous-soo*, a bowl of buttermilk, a great dish of white meal with a steamed chicken atop of it, and pomegranates for dessert. There were knife and fork and plate for me, but the Shareef ate with his hands.

"Tell me the news from Paris," he said.

Among other things I told him of the execution of Ferrer at Barcelona, and the excitement it had caused all over Europe. He was interested at once, and showered questions.

"About those riots in Spain. Were they really in protest against the war with our Riff tribesmen at Melilla? Was the trouble really serious? How many more men can Spain put in the field?"

I told him that I did not believe that Alfonso could increase his effective force at Melilla by twenty-five thousand men without facing a revolution at home.

"Then, what can they do? Nothing. Their men are already dying like flies with fever. And France? How is it there? At the time of Casablanca there were many demonstrations in Paris. The Moroccan war was very unpopular. Are the Radicals and

Socialists still keeping up their agitation? Yes? How many men could France send down here?"

"Not more than a hundred thousand," I said.

"Not so many," he replied quickly. "Not unless they make peace with Germany. It would disturb the balance of military power in Europe. A Holy War here would affect Algeria and Tunisia. France would have to increase her garrisons there. It might even trouble the British in Egypt. No! England could not allow France to embark on such an adventure. It would be the death of the *entente. N'est-ce-pas?*"

For a moment the conversation was interrupted by the boys who brought coffee.

"Muley-el-Hafid, the Exalted of God," — there was bitter sarcasm in my host's voice as he spoke of the reigning Sultan,— "has never heard of the anti-militarists, nor of 'the ominous hush' in Europe. He does not realize his opportunity. It is like your story of Christ. For centuries the Jews had awaited the coming of the Messiah. He came, and they did not know it. For centuries we Moors have hoped

for a new *Jehad* — a Holy War in which we should for all time drive the Infidel from our shores. Never before has there been such a chance of success. Never before has Christendom been so embarrassed at home. Opportunity will not come twice — we let it slip."

"You do not think there will be a *Jehad?*" I asked.

"Who would lead it? Not the Filali!"

"Is there no other leader?"

"Who?" He waved his hand slowly in sign of negation. "By the way, what has happened to Madame Steinheil?"

And for the rest of my visit Muley Abd Allah refused to discuss the chances of a *Jehad*, the one question which dominates all others in Morocco.

Yet in these few words he gave me the substance of many later talks with other Moors. If they wish to keep their land intact, if they wish to avoid the fate of the rest of North Africa — Egypt, Tunis, Algeria — they will have to fight. There can be no question that their national existence is threatened by the determined encroachments of the Powers. And if

they are to make a serious resistance, now is the time. Within a week they would lose their coast towns — one modern battle-ship could destroy any of them. But the Hinterland is another question. The capture of Fez would be harder business than the Khartum campaign. And even if that were accomplished, Marrakesh, the Atlas Mountains, and Tafilalt — the real heart of the Empire — would still be untouched. It would take years of desperate daily fighting to subdue the country. Which of the Powers is prepared to undertake it now? Those Moors who are familiar with the internal politics of Europe (luckily for Christendom, a very small number) and most of the wiser Europeans here believe that, if the Sultan proclaimed a *Jehad,* it would precipitate a widespread war in Europe, perhaps a revolution or two. After all, Morocco is a very small pawn on the international chess-board. If the Powers were fighting for national existence at home, they could not spare a corporal's guard to protect the European residents in Tangier.

On the other hand, there is no visible chance of the Moors uniting. As Muley Abd Allah

said, the Filali Sultans are utterly discredited with their people. There are no pretenders of note, except those who are tools of the Powers. France having control of the former Sultan Abd ul-Aziz, Germany helped his brother, Muley el-Hafid, to dethrone him. In reply France financed the unfortunate pretender El-Rogi, and now seems to be backing Muley el-Kebir. There is little chance of any such men becoming the *Mahdi* of a new *Jehad*.

Later in the evening, when the chill of the twilight had passed, we moved out on the roof. Across the Straits we could see the flash of the lighthouse above Tarifa, and in the harbor of Gibraltar some search-lights were wigwagging. But these things of Europe seemed very, very far away. There was a young moon in the sky, silvering everything about us, and coming up from the women's court we could hear the twanging of stringed instruments, the "mournful sobbing of a flute," now and then a musical laugh or a strain from some strange guttural melody. Generally the sight of far-away, unknown people signalling fills me with vivid curiosity; but, somehow, this night I had no

interest in the message those English search-lights were sending.

Abd Allah, the Shareef, was also watching the search-light.

"You see," he said, "I am never out of sight of Europe. I wonder if you Christians ever realize how strange, how inexplicable, you seem to us. We cannot understand your interest in mere matter. It is wonderful, your science. How you have weighed the air and measured the sun, how you have traced the genealogy of all living things, how you have classified the microscopic vermin which live on fleas. But all this seems irrelevant — irreverent — blasphemy against the sovereignty of man. All these centuries, when we have been thinking about ourselves, you have been thinking about things.

"We are inclined to think of all your laboratories as vain toys — hardly becoming to a man. Is the world a better place to live in because we know it is round? Is man happier because in your laboratories you have cut out his soul? 'What is all this science worth?' my people ask. Well, we get our answer! Bang! A

dumdum bullet in our head. Those war-ships over there in the harbor of Jibel Tarik, which you have renamed Gibraltar; the complicated mechanism of that rifle you brought me as a gift — that is the answer to our question. One thing your science has given you — a better bullet, a gun which shoots faster, carries farther. Bang! The bullet hits us — and the argument of the ages is closed.

"Man, for man, in the old days, in the strength of our right arms, we were at least your equals. Then gunpowder came. We were not of a 'scientific frame of mind.' We did not study the sinister black powder to see how it could be improved. We kept to our dreaming, our singing, our contemplation of life — and now you have us on the hip. Our philosophy, our poems — which you can understand as little as we understand your laboratory reports — are doomed.

"And the joke of it all is that it was an accident — this invincible bullet of yours — a by-product. Your scientists did not spend these centuries in their laboratories to make bullets, but to find the truth. *La Vérité*, that

is the God of the Franks. Did you find it? How could you? You sought it in inanimate *things*, in stones and dirt and filth, in things you could stew in your little glass test-tubes, in things you could dissolve in your acids, things you could dissect with your knives. Your heat will never be great enough, your acids will never be strong enough, nor your knives sufficiently sharp to reach the Master Truth. For it is not in these dead things, but in living man.

"You will not admit it, perhaps, but we have produced greater psychologists than you — only we call them poets. Our wandering beggar troubadours are nearer the Master Truth, know more of the heart of man, its pains and hopes and fears, than your scientists, although they have never dissected a brain.

"Truth? Man wants to know what he should do; your science tells him what he is made of. Man asks what he should *believe* — your science tells him what he can *know*. Your science was on the wrong track, but quite by accident it found how to make better bullets. And the discussion of how man should seek for truth is drowned out by the rattle of your mus-

ketry. And of course" — he paused to light his long-stemmed, small-bowled *keef-pipe* — "the wisest people are those whose bullets fly straightest. You have won.

"Another thing which makes it hard for the East to understand the West," he went on, "is that we are so much more religious than you are. A Christian comes to Morocco. The Moors instinctively think that he has come to spread his religion. They rally to the defence of their mosque. Before they know it the Christian has stolen everything else in sight. The one thing they protected — their religion — was the one thing which didn't interest him.

"Of course I have been in Europe enough to know that there are relatively few Christians in Christendom. I mean few who make their religion a rule of life, as we do. Christianity would be a wonderful religion if you lived up to it. I have met a few who did. I have respected them very highly. Some of them come here as missionaries. They are good men. They seem to have more hope of making real converts here than at home. Their chance here is very small. They preach love; and one of their

'Christian' battleships shells a sleeping town, massacres women and children, as the French did at Casablanca, with those wonderful bullets of yours. Your missionaries preach purity, and tell us it is wrong to have more than one wife; and the Europeans make prostitution a public show in the streets of Tangier. If your missionaries would first convert their coreligionists, they would make better progress with my people.

"Every intelligent Moor is grateful for the wonderful work of your medical missionaries and their hospitals. I know some of them. They are good men. But their proselyting work is defeated by the irreligion of their countrymen. For one good missionary my people see a hundred Christians who are utterly unworthy. 'Ho, ho!' say my people; 'do the Franks think they can fool their God?'"

"Hold on," I said. "You say your people are so much more religious than mine. I do not see it. It seems to me the honors are fairly even; there are as many scoundrels among the Moors as among us. Look at all your maladministration, your venal judges, your robber

raids. It seems worse than Tammany Hall to me. Your Minister of Foreign Affairs gets off the epigram: 'One lie will keep European diplomats busy a year — and we have a treasury full of lies!' Does Mohammed justify lying?"

The Shareef shrugged his shoulders.

"The frankness with which he admits his policy is at least un-Christian. And I doubt if he ever committed such a flagrant lie as the French phrase — '*pénétration pacifique*.' But I do not claim that my people are perfectly moral, even judged by their own religion. But simply that they take it much more seriously than you do. Your men, do they go to church the way Mussulmans attend their mosque? Compare your Lenten fast with our month of Ramadan. Your Christ told his followers to fast, just as our Prophet did. Your people found that fasts were inconvenient, and moderated them. I have even heard that some of your sects have decided that Christ was mistaken in this matter and have released their followers from all obligation to fast. Perhaps you will say, this is lip-service, formalism. But it goes to show that in general my people

follow more closely the rules of their religion. And there is another question — the attitude towards wealth — which goes deeper than lip-service. Both our prophets, Jesus and Mohammed, like all great religious leaders, preached poverty, or at least contempt for worldly goods. Mussulmans and Christians alike are tempted by the luxuries and power of wealth. Few of either creed are strong enough to resist the temptation. A Moor who gives up all his energy to the accumulation of gold is a bad Mussulman, just as your greedy millionnaires are violating the precepts of Christ. But in Europe — I do not know America — how many men are voluntarily poor for their faith's sake? Do you recall that beggar I pointed out to you down in the courtyard as a holy man? He is respected by us. The people respect the *bashas* and *kaïds* through fear. But for this man, and thousands like him, they have a higher respect. What respect would he have among the Christians? What would you think in America of a man who left his work three times a day to pray? We all do that. Suppose your Christ had forbidden usury, the lend-

ing of money on interest, as our Prophet did. Would he have been obeyed? I could multiply instances a hundred times to show that, on the whole, my people try harder to live their religion than you do. Of course there are exceptions on both sides. You have had your Saint Francis and now your Tolstoy, who try to live literally by the word of Christ. We have had atheist caliphs, and now the wine-drinking Filali Sultans.

"But what is the use of trying to compare the two races or the value of their religions — you have the better bullets — *voilà tout!*"

As Abd Allah was bidding me good-night he found on the floor of my room a little pile of books. A peculiar look came into his eyes, the furtive glance of one who sees a forbidden thing. After a moment's hesitation, he stooped over them, fingering them.

"I have not read a book of the Infidels for a long time," he said. And then he added: "I will take this one, with your permission, and glance it over."

It was Bergsen's "*L'Évolution Créatrice*" — four hundred pages of closely packed thought.

In the morning he returned to my room and tossed Bergsen on the divan.

"I have read it," he said. Then he paced back and forth. "Many of my people despise you for the elasticity of your religion, the weak inability of your Church to control your acts and thoughts. But it is the very invincible rigidity of our religion which has spelled our doom. In every conflict between orthodoxy and independent thought the Koran has won. All heresies have been suppressed. There has been no new thought in Mussuldom; we are dying of dry rot. Centuries ago, under the Bagdad Caliphate, one of our men enunciated the same doctrine as this man Bergsen; of course not in these modern scientific terms, but it was practically the same thought. And, well, they tied him face backward on a mule, stoned him through the market-place, fed him his fingers, and made him swallow his teeth. And he died, and his thought died with him, except the barest tradition of his heresy.

"The strength of modern Christendom is Protestantism and its corollary rationalism. Your Popes — just like our *Ulema* — tried to



Photograph by Lehnert & Landrock, Tunis.

A DATE GROVE IN THE SOUTH

suppress free thought, but they failed. Ecclesiastical authority, which has always been supreme with us, is a joke to you. And it has meant for us — what is your scientific word? atrophication? yes — the atrophication of our power of criticism. It has stopped the advance of our thought. We are hopelessly conservative."

Later his Highness returned to the subject.

"There is another evil result to religious authority. The irresistible force of our religion has made it an octopus in other things than pure thought. Our greatest national weakness is lack of patriotism. Our people are infinitely more loyal to their religion than are the Franks. But so absorbing is this one loyalty that they have no force left for the other loyalties which make our European enemies strong. We have no national nor dynastic loyalty. We are Mussulmans infinitely more than we are Moors. Mecca calls us louder than Fez.

"France could not get a thousand volunteers for a Crusade. A million men would jump to their arms to fight Germany. Ninety-nine per cent of the Moors, the blind and the lame,

women and children, would enlist, give all their worldly goods, for the holy *Jehad*. None of us would march in a national or dynastic war except from hope of gain or rank fear."

The last night of my visit I sat again with my host on the flat roof, looking out across the Straits. We talked the night through — of Hindu philosophy, of the new French Ministry, of Moorish art, of a well-loved café on the Boulevard St. Michel, of America's mission in the world, of the ethics of war. I cannot begin to recall all the subjects we discussed. And at last the moon had sunk down into the sea, taking all life from the deep-cut sides of Jibel Musa, leaving it a dead black profile against the false dawn of the eastern sky — the Shareef turned to me abruptly.

"Tell me," he said, "what do you think of me?"

There was no time to work up a graceful answer, and I told him the metaphor which had been forming in my mind ever since I saw him.

"Our scientists," I said, "tell us that this seemingly solid earth is a molten ball of fire, with only a thin crust. Sometimes the crust

breaks open — a volcano — and so we get knowledge of the thing inside. You have protected yourself with a crust of jesting cynicism, but sometimes there is an eruption and the spirit on fire within shines out."

"Volcanoes," he said, "are always destructive."

I had not meant him to see so clearly into my metaphor. But he did not seem offended. After a pause he went on:

"Gradually, your scientists say, the crust thickens and thickens, till at last the fire will be extinct."

"That will be the end of all life."

"So," he said, with a smile, "as long as I live, you think I will be dangerous? You would advise the French to extinguish my little fire — artificially?"

"Yes," I said. "If I loved the French and were advising them for their comfort."

He laughed harshly, deep in his throat, and said something which, while I could not be sure, sounded like the oft-repeated fatalistic proverb, "What is written in the Book needs must be."

"And now," he said, "you must get some sleep if you are to ride to-morrow."

I think, on the whole, my metaphor pleased him. It is flattering to be thought dangerous.

I think that sometimes Muley Abd Allah, Shareef of Makainfain, grows restive of his futile life, tires of his women, and walks apart on his flat roof, a prey to ambitious dreams — volcanic, destructive dreams. His mind frees itself from the narrowing limits of his creed; he looks out across the Straits, sees all the world, and the brave part he might play on this great stage as the *Mahdi* — the Messiah — of his people. And the foretaste of the vengeance he could wreak on the French, who have stolen him from his people and branded him, is sweet in his mouth. And then, perhaps, a search-light flashes out from a Dreadnought at Gibraltar, and he thinks of the round bullets of his people, their inability to keep a rifle clean — and his dream wilts, a new flake is added to the crust of his cynicism, and he goes back to his women, his *keef-pipe*, and forgetfulness.

TANGIER, MOROCCO, 1910.

VII. HADJE MOHMED OF LUNA PARK

ON the top of a little hill overlooking the Bay of Tangier is a house belonging to Hadje Mohmed bin Yusef. Before it is a little platform of beaten earth where his apprentices go through endless acrobatic practice to prepare themselves for the music halls of the Infidels.

Hadje Mohmed is an American citizen; his voting residence is Luna Park. When I first met him, not knowing all this, I asked him if he spoke English. "Sure t'ing," he said. In reality he speaks Coney-Islandese. But if you saw him sitting with his lawyers before the Grand Mosque, as I did first, you would never suspect his Americanism. He dresses entirely after the Moorish manner while in Tangier. It was a decided shock for me to see the emblem of the "Elks" pinned in the folds of his flowing *jillab*.

Hadje Mohmed started out as a member of a troupe of tumblers. But he had risen to the

point where he had his own show on the "Midway" at the Columbian Exposition. He has been a partner with Buffalo Bill, has performed in Moscow and Buenos Aires. At present he has ten troupes on the road, and is a rich man.

Hadje Mohmed has kept true to his religion. How many Christians who vote from Coney Island can make a like claim? He has made the pilgrimage to Mecca, and he has never — not even at his initiation to the Elks — violated the Prophet's injunction against strong drink.

One day I rode out with him to his house on the hill. He wanted me to see his "boys," and, above all, to meet his uncle, Si Ali el-Hafid.

"He's de real t'ing," Hadje Mohmed told me. "Foist Moorish American citizen. He long time in States. He used to be great artist. Now he go down and out — too old — dead one. But he good friend. He gotta heart big as box car."

We came to a gate in a high thorn hedge, and my host gave a shout in Arabic. Immediately there was uproar within. "Ba Mohmed!" "Ba Mohmed!" from a dozen boyish voices,

"Ba" being the Arabic for "father." The gate swung open and the youngsters tumbled out, each struggling for the chance to hold "Ba" Mohmed's stirrup or care for his horse. Never have I seen such evident affection between a master and his apprentices. And I began to suspect that Hadje Mohmed's heart is also as big as a box car.

Inside we came on the flat of hard-beaten earth, the scene of the boys' practice. No mats for these lads; if they fall, it is on ground as hard as concrete. Beyond the little plateau is a down sweep of yellow sand to the Bay — light green in the shallows where the white surf breaks, then turning blue farther out, until, beyond the Cape, is seen the ultramarine of the Straits. Twenty miles across are the yellow hills of Spain.

To the left of the practice field is a low, white, red-tiled house.

"My office," said Hadje Mohmed. "Not much. Better office at Coney Island. Good 'nuff for Morocco. Nut'in' up to date here."

Within, sitting cross-legged on a gorgeous Sous carpet, under a signed portrait of President

Grant and a picture of the Flatiron Building, was Si Ali el-Hafid, white-haired, his eyes sunken and glassy. He was over eighty years old and nearing his dotage. But the sight of an American seemed to revive him. "Ich bin American," he said. In his old brain the many languages he had learned in his youth were sadly mixed. But gradually his memory awoke.

"See," he said, "President Grant gave me his picture. I go to White House, see President Grant and his wife. She — country woman."

Hadje Mohmed explained that Si Ali was a very wise man, and could tell at sight if a person was town-bred or a country man.

"Yes," said Si Ali. "I tell always. You country man."

I wonder if his guess about Mrs. Grant was any better. I have rarely seen a potato which was not cooked, and have the vaguest of ideas about the trees from which they are picked. But I did not like to contradict the old man, so I lied gracefully and said he was very wise.

Then he asked me to sit down and he would tell me a story.

"Ah," said Hadje Mohmed, "you listen.

He great story-teller. Before he go to States he wander all round Morocco and tell stories. Hobo."

And the old man, remembering with much pain the English words, told me the venerable old story of the East about how it happens that there are devils in the world. When Allah sent the flood in the days of Noah, his object was to drown out evil. And Noah had special orders not to let any bad thing enter the ark. There was only one narrow gangplank, and Noah stood beside it with a big stick. All the people of the earth, all the animals, crowded about, hoping to get in. But Noah would let none pass who could not show a clean bill of health. At last all those predestined to be saved were aboard except a pair of asses. As in the eyes of Eastern people these are the most useful of all animals, Noah was anxious to save them, but they balked. He had a strenuous time trying to get them on the gangplank, and at last, losing his temper, he cursed them.

"Go in, you fools," he cried, "and may devils ride you!"

A few days after Noah had pulled up his

anchor he heard a deafening row down in the hold. Running down, he was surprised to see a couple of devils teasing the elephants.

"How did you get aboard?" he demanded.

"Did you not tell us to ride in on the asses?"

"And so," said Si Ali, "because old Noah said bad words, we, his children, are plagued by devils."

The old man told me another story — this time of his own life. Forty years ago he had been with a troupe in Mexico City. And, going out into the country for a walk, he lost his way. At last he reached a cluster of adobe huts. His strange clothes attracted the village folk, including the *padre*. "They were all afraid of me," Si Ali said, "except the priest. 'Where do you come from?' he asked me. 'Tangier,' I said; I could speak Spanish very well. 'Where is Tangier?' he asked. 'In Africa,' I said. 'Where is Africa?' Such a stupid priest! 'In Jerusalem,' I told him for a joke." The *padre* fell down and kissed Si Ali's feet, and, getting up, preached a sermon on the spot, telling his flock that on account of his own great sanctity, the Lord as a special mark of favor

had sent him this messenger from the Holy City. "He asked me to preach to the people," Si Ali ended, "but I would not. Why should I, who am a Moor, help at a Christian meeting?"

Hadje Mohmed called his boys together for an exhibition. There were five who were full-grown, and a dozen youngsters around ten. Their work was commonplace enough — you can see it any summer day at Coney. But what impressed me was the good-fellowship and light-heartedness of it all. One reads and hears so much of the sombre dignity of the Moor. I have never seen a crew who got so much fun from skylarking and horse-play. They were full of loving respect for the two older men, but were unrestrained by their presence. Old Si Ali, whom they helped out to a seat in the sun, was forever calling them clumsy imbeciles and threatening them with his cane.

Hadje Mohmed took one of them by the ear — a strapping young giant of twenty — and led him over to me.

"See this stupid lunatic," he said; "he make much trouble. Last year I had him at

Luna Park. He came home before me and tell everybody that Coney Island is on the bottom of the earth. He say you come to New York in big boat, then go down in deep, deep well, ride long time in car, come out other side of earth — that Coney Island. Si Ali, he been often in Coney Island in old days. He say young man here liar; he say you go to Coney by great big bridge. Young man say he never see no big bridge; he always go through earth to other side. Si Ali mad. He want to send him away for fool and liar. Then I come back and explain about Subway."

After the exhibition Hadje Mohmed invited me to dinner.

"You come my house for *kous-kous-soo* — Moor dinner. I got fine house in town. Si Ali, he tell you more stories. Si Ali play on *t'bil* — Moor drum — and *r'bab* — little fiddle. Very fine."

From a narrow, dirty street we turned through a great arched gate into a dark court and up some perilously steep stairs to a high, light room. There were divans about three sides, and on the walls some prints from the-

atrical papers and some signed photos of vaudeville artists.

Si Ali tried — vainly — to teach me the Moorish way of eating *kous-kous-soo*. It is the most difficult table feat I have ever seen — infinitely more elusive than chopsticks. The *kous-kous-soo* is a cereal which has been drained and dried until it is as little cohesive as sawdust or fine birdshot. You — I should say the Moors — take a handful out of the common dish and by some mysterious sleight of hand roll it into a ball which sticks together and toss it a distance of three or four inches into their mouths. Once, after twenty attempts, I made something which looked like a ball, but when I tried to toss it to my mouth it exploded — all over my face. Then came grapes and tea — very sweet tea in which fresh mint leaves are crushed.

Something which my host said showed that they were men of the South — Berbers of the Sous Mountains. And at once I asked them to tell me about Sidi Hammo, the great poet of their people. I had known these "*andama*," which rival the "Rubáiyát" of Omar, through

the translation of R. L. N. Johnston, for some time, but I wanted to hear them in the original *Shilhah* language, to catch the lilt of their rhythm.

"Sidi Hammo!" Hadje Mohmed cried gleefully. "You heard tell of Sidi Hammo? Our Sidi Hammo? How you hear about him?"

I told him that I had read some of his poems in English.

"It is impossible," said Si Ali. "Who could translate them? They have never been written down."

The *Shilhah* is indeed an unwritten language. But Mr. Johnston, who has long been a resident of Mogador, discovered that it can be phonetically written in the Arabic alphabet. And from the lips of his Berber friends he copied down the treasured verses and translated them. But I could not persuade my hosts that this was possible until I recited to them some of the couplets I chanced to remember:

"When the last of the crop lies low, when
the harvest is gathered in,
What held for us weal or woe? What
stirred us to prayer or sin?

What sweeter heaven was here? What
bitterer hell our lot?
Than the soft 'I love thee, dear'? Than
the dread 'I love thee not'?

And may the mercy of the Lord belong
To Sidi Hammo — singer of this song."

"Yes! yes!" Hadje Mohmed shouted; "that's Sidi Hammo, sure t'ing!"

It was as though we, who were scarcely acquainted, had found a mutual friend.

There is a very pretty story about this old Berber singer. Tradition has it that he was an orphan, befriended by a widow with three daughters, to one of whom, Fadma, all Sidi Hammo's love and song was dedicated. While he was still a youth and entirely dependent on his benefactress a negro troubadour came to his village. And in the evening, as all the country folk were gathered about to hear him sing, for some unknown reason he made Fadma the butt of some slanderous gibes. There was no local song-knight to break a lance in her behalf. The boy Hammo was so distressed at his inability to defend her that he wandered, half-crazed, into the hills, and at last, over-

come by sleep, found shelter beside the shrine of a saint. In the night a dream came to him. His mouth was filled with small round objects which at first he thought to be dried peas, but they proved to be pearls. The saint had taken pity on his sorrow and had given him the gift of song. He returned to the village and triumphantly routed the negro in a song tournament. Some of these, his first verses, Mr. Johnston has translated:

By what law, Allah, shall a raven gorge on so dainty sweet a fruit as this?

He, a barn-door fowl, is fain to fly to heaven. 'Tis not, indeed, for lack of feathers that he fails: the Lord would have none of him.

Because he is black, gunpowder is aping antimony, thinking to stain my lady's eyelash.

May the Angel of Death stay his hand from me until I have paid the slanderer's barley twice over in wheat!

May he who wounded Fadma live to herd with outcast peddlers. May they be his only associates. With them let him bear his pack from town to town in living death, until he perish!

Sidi Hammo was not, however, always so vituperative. The vividness of his hatred for this negro slanderer is only the reflex of his



THE BASHA'S PALACE



THE TREASURY



THE PRISON

THE KASBA OF TANGIER



love for Fadma. Some of his love lyrics are exquisite.

While Si Ali was tuning up his *r'bab*, getting ready to sing me some of these songs, we were disturbed by a great hubbub at the gate. Then in broke a crowd of men. Most of them, by their *jillabs* of European cloth, seemed to be residents of Tangier. Two were evidently fresh from Berber land — their *jillabs* were of soft brown camel's-hair and their turbans were so wound that none of the central cap could be seen. And one wore the rags of a beggar. There was much kissing of hands and the clatter of hearty greetings. For a minute or more I was entirely forgotten. But when he had succeeded in settling his guests, Hadje Mohmed introduced them to me.

"Two men, sheiks from our country — the Sous — big chiefs. And the poor man, he a *raïs*, great poet, like Sidi Hammo. His name Si Abu Bakr. All three make *hadje* — pilgrimages to Mecca. They bring news from Sous. I send out my boys; more Sous men come. By'mbye Si Abu Bakr, he sing. Oh, you wait, you hear real t'ing — real poet."

And then he turned to his guests. The two sheiks, the poet between them, held the place of honor. And the Tangier men kept them busy with questions. Every few minutes a newcomer would arrive, and again there would be salutations and greeting.

Of course they talked in *Shilhah*, and there are not half a dozen Europeans who can understand it. But it did not bore me, that half-hour of strange conversation. They were wonderfully expressive with their gestures. I could catch the drift of some of it. I could see when the news from home and loved ones was good or bad.

Suddenly a change came over them all. Every face became stolid and unexpressive; they used a lower tone. One of the sheiks began it, speaking earnestly for several minutes. There was a pause, and then the sheik turned to Si Ali — the oldest man present — with a direct question. There was a general nod of assent, as though he were recognized as the most fit to answer. When he had finished, one after the other took up the word, speaking gravely.

Hadje Mohmed leaned over and touched my

knee. He winked roguishly. "They talk politics now," he whispered. "All like Tammany Hall."

When they seemed to have reached the end of the subject, Hadje Mohmed rose, and I could see that he was speaking of me.

"I tell them," he said, "you interested in Berber poetry, now he go sing."

Si Abu Bakr, the beggar, took from the tattered fold of his *jillab* a beautifully worked "*âood*," a very small lute on which one plays with an eagle quill. For a moment he thrummed away on it without any apparent rhyme or reason. At last he struck a chord which seemed to please him. He shut his eyes, threw back his head, and seemed lost in contemplation — reiterating that one chord pitilessly. Then he looked us over, staring vacantly at each of us a moment, still on the same chord. He began to sing, evidently composing as he went along. The first few couplets he found with difficulty, but suddenly assurance came to him, and he sang boldly and freely. At first his voice seemed unpleasant, as unmusical as his weird insistence on that one chord. But gradually

some mystic charm came into it. Irresistibly, this inexplicable charm grew and grew. And when he had finished, I felt that I knew, vaguely, to be sure, but still I felt I knew, why his people call him a great poet.

It was ludicrous — painful — to hear Hadje Mohmed translate the song into the current slang of Coney Island. The poet's thought lost all grace of expression.

It had been a song of welcome to me; a comment on the mysterious working of the will of Allah and the great virtue of hospitality. If, said the poet, he had met me elsewhere, my clothes would have proclaimed me an Infidel — an enemy of his country and his God. He would have stepped aside that my shadow might not fall on him. But here he met me beside the table of dear friends; even if I had killed his father, the laws of guestship, as ordained by the Prophet, would restrain his hand from all but the giving of gifts. And he, Abu Bakr, was the most humble of all Allah's slaves — the most poor. He had nothing to offer me but the devout wish that The Most Merciful might shower me with blessing in this

life and the life to come. And might the grace of Allah, the Protector, rest on all gathered here beneath the roof of Hadje Mohmed — most generous of benefactors.

Then the lute was passed to Si Ali.

"He also poet — not great poet — only sometimes great," said Hadje Mohmed.

The old man went through a similar preliminary to find a chord, and when he did find it, it was the saddest, most heartsick one I ever heard. Si Ali's voice was old and cracked and harsh, but somehow the message came — the message of a heart in pain. It had the most definite of all artistic qualities — sincerity. There was no dry eye in the room when he finished.

"He sing homesick song. He great that time," Hadje Mohmed said. "He sing about Sous country. He not see his home, the mountains, for twenty years. He sing about wife who die down there in Sous country when he 'way off in America. He not gone back to see her tomb. He want to die quick and see her again. He great that time. I — crying."

For a moment we were all silent, and then

Hadje Mohmed, to break the gloom, caused by the old man's sorrow, handed the lute to one of the sheiks.

"He no poet," Hadje Mohmed explained. "He sing other man's song. He go sing Arab song. He go sing Arab song about old days in Spain."

There was no preliminary twanging this time; it was evidently a fixed tune, and more of a tune, more of a melody, than I have ever heard from Moorish musicians. It was surprising how much volume the sheik could get out of that little lute — volume and martial spirit. There was no need for Hadje Mohmed to tell me it was a war song. The sheik had a great round bass voice, and all the men joined in the refrain. Often the word "Andalusia" was repeated, and once or twice I caught the names of Seville and Granada.

When the ringing applause was over, one of the Tangier men took the lute and forced it on Hadje Mohmed.

"I no good poet," he said to me shamefacedly. "I just make funny verses, comedian — like Harry Lauder. They want me to sing

song I made about politics, about Abd ul-Aziz and Muley el-Hafid and the French. They all afraid to sing funny thing about politics. But I — American citizen. I ain't afraid."

So he sat down on the floor and bawled out his satire to their great amusement. At first the visitors from the South did not seem entirely to approve of his ribald gibes at the descendants of the Prophet. But his song must have been irresistibly funny, for before long they melted into uncontrolled hilarity.

And when he had finished, Hadje Mohmed handed me the lute.

"Now," he said, "you — you do a turn."

I protested that I was neither a poet nor the son of a poet, nor even distantly related to one. But all the Moors insisted.

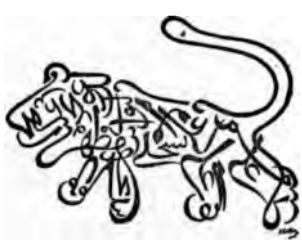
"Oh, go on! Sing," Hadje Mohmed said. "They all want hear American song. Sing 'Bill Baily.'"

To escape the horror of the idea I recited "Drink to me only with thine eyes." Hadje Mohmed translated it. Abu Bakr, the poet, said it was a pleasing fancy and perhaps some day he would make a song of it.

When I left them, Hadje Mohmed accompanied me to the door.

"I see you some time in New York. Yes?" he said. "We have dinner some night at Rector's. Sure t'ing."

TANGIER, 1910.



VIII. ASMASSIAN — APOSTLE OF CIVILIZATION

IT is strange that the one man I have found in Morocco who is willing to defend the doings of the European powers is not a European.

The life of Tangier centers about the cafés of the Socco Chico. If you sit long enough before any of them, you will see all Morocco pass by. It is an ideal spot for the easy-chair explorer. Why visit the dangerous mountains of El-Riff? Sit still and you will see Riffian brigands come to the Socco Chico to buy contraband cartridges. Why struggle over the hard nine-day train to Fez? The Socco Chico is crowded with Fasi. Without the least discomfort you can see Sudanese water carriers, Hillsmen from the Great Atlas, Berbers from the Sous. Before the Moorish cafés you will see snake charmers, jugglers, and players on strange instruments. In the European cafés you will see diplomats, French and Spanish

officers fresh from their campaigns about Casablanca and Melilla, and deserters from the Foreign Legion. And there, if you stay long enough, you will meet (as I did) Asmassian.

There are three European cafés in Socco Chico. I fell into the habit of the *Café de la Patrie*, because of the French waiters. I do not speak Spanish, so the *Café de Madrid* was out of the question. And the *Café du Commerce*, where one of the waiters speaks English, looks dingy. So it happened that my patronage fell to the *Café de la Patrie*.

At first one has little peace, being beseiged by sellers of postal cards and imitation Sous daggers at fantastic prices, and by the man — he is a persevering chap — who for half a Spanish dollar offers to take you to his house and let you peek from his window into the garden of the *Basha's* harem. But in due course of time you acquire an assortment of strenuous negatives in Arabic and Spanish and are let alone.

I was beginning to consider myself an old resident of Tangier, when one day my attention was called from the five-day-old *Matin* I was reading by a question in French.

"Is this chair occupied?"

Looking up, I saw before me a short, thick-set, fat-faced, neckless man. He had black hair and heavy eyebrows, shading shifty, unpleasant eyes. His clothes were French, but his complexion showed him to be from the Levant. He nodded to me in a friendly way and said in English:

"You are an American?"

"Yes."

"With your permission I will sit here and drink my coffee."

"As you will," I said, making a mental note that many other chairs were vacant, and, if he had cared to, he could have had a table to himself. I turned back to my paper, but when his coffee had been brought, he interrupted again:

"You have come to Morocco for a long stay?"

"I may leave on the next boat — I may stay all winter," I replied.

"Business or pleasure?"

"Business — which I find pleasant."

"You are fortunate. But you will not find business a pleasure here — for long. You will

lose patience — as every one does. Morocco is a pleasant place only for collectors. Do you happen to know Mr. Merton — Charles Merton, of New York? No? He is a great collector of Moorish embroideries, especially old Fez embroidery. There are many things here to interest collectors — rugs, leather work, tiles. Tiles are the best. These stupid Moors have no idea of art nowadays; nothing which they make is interesting. But three hundred years ago they did the best tile-work the world has ever seen — wonderful! glorious! All this enamel work from the Sous, which some people prize, is meretricious — cheap, vulgar. So are all these modern rugs and lace and pottery. A real connoisseur cares only for tiles."

I would remark, parenthetically, that I do not at all agree with Asmassian's estimate of current Moorish art. Much of their craftsmanship is exquisite.

Asmassian went on to tell me that collecting tiles was his profession. Whenever an old country house was falling into decay, he would scent it out and travel weeks to see it if it contained any tiles worth having.

"Who buys your tiles?" I asked.

"Governments, municipalities, for their museums. Whenever you see a Moorish tile, you look on the edge; if it is marked with a red A in a black circle, it is mine. A stands for Asmassian — my name. Then there are many private collectors who buy from me. And sometimes a rich man builds a villa upon the Marshan here, or over in Spain. If they want old Moorish tiles — genuine ones — they must come to me. Would you like to see my tiles? I have a shop here on the edge of the Socco. Come, I will show them to you."

I excused myself on the ground that I was neither a government museum nor a private collector.

"It would not be worth your while," I said. "I cannot conceive of any combination of circumstance which would persuade me to buy a tile."

"It is not that I want to sell you any," he said. "I am not a pedler. I thought you would appreciate a fine collection — there is not another such collection in the world. I was mistaken. I wish you good-day."

And he stalked off, apparently in a great rage. I felt badly about giving him offence and determined to ask pardon when I saw him again. But he did not give me the chance. When I saw him, next, — two days later, — he was effusively friendly and seemed to have forgotten his indignation. He renewed his invitation that I visit his shop. It was not convenient that day, but I promised to come later. And finally one day as I walked down town I heard him calling me.

His shop is a little hole in the wall, not ten feet square, opening on to the main street, where it broadens into the Socco Chico. It is an even better place from which to observe the passing show than the *terrasse* of the *Café de la Patrie*. He pulled out for me a little stool, and set it down close to the imaginary line which divides his shop from the street. There is no sidewalk, and every once in a while the saddle trappings of a camel would brush my back. A negro apprentice displayed the tiles one at a time to a running comment from Asmassian like this:

"That is a very fine tile. I have eight hun-

dred of them. They come from an old place at Al K'zar, about five centuries old. Very valuable.

"I have only seventy-eight of these — from a public fountain in Mogador. Later period — say, three hundred and fifty years old.

"Look! Such a fine glaze! wonderful green! From the Mosque of Akmet at Marrakesh."

To tell the truth, the tiles bored me. I do not know the A B C of ceramics, on which intelligent interest in such things must be based. And the tales he told me of his adventures collecting them seemed highly fantastic. When I had seen the last of them, I rose with a sigh of relief. But he detained me — he had sent the apprentice out for coffee, it would be here in a few minutes.

"Is your business here in regard to mines?" he asked. "There are rumors of very rich mines in the interior. But I have been all over the country, and I know it is not so." (This was a lie. The existence of very rich mineral deposits is well known.)

"No," I said, "I am not interested in mines. I am a journalist."

Asmassian seemed to be pleased to know my business, but presently the smile wilted from his fat face and he shook his head mournfully.

"It must be hard to be a journalist. Some paper sends you here to write about Morocco in three weeks. Many journalists come here, and all write foolishness. But it is not their fault — how could they learn the truth? They don't stay long enough.

"And what mistake do they make most often?" I asked. "I'll try to be original and avoid that error."

"Well" — Asmassian pondered. "Generally they attack the French, who are the hope of the country. And they praise the Moors, who are worthless. Good for nothing but to lie, and cheat, and make trouble. But how can a person find that out in a few weeks? No European can begin to understand what trouble-makers the Moors are."

"I should not think the French would have trouble understanding," I said. "They are very good trouble-makers themselves."

"Why, what do you mean?"

"How about El-Rogi, the pretender? He

made no end of trouble. The French were back of him."

"Oh, nonsense! A fantastic rumor. Some good-for-nothing in the Socco Chico — some guide — told you that foolish story. Nobody believes the French capable of such duplicity."

(This was lie number two. The fact of French complicity in the insurrection of El-Rogi is admitted by everybody. The French denied it at first. But it was proved that two officers of the French army were with the rebel forces. One of them escaped, the other died of fever on the eve of the pretender's defeat. His body was absolutely identified. Germany had won a move on France by financing Muley el-Hafid in his successful attempt to dethrone "the French Sultan," Abd ul-Aziz. The French tried the same tactics — tried and failed to oust El-Hafid by their friend El-Rogi. Most of the internal trouble in Morocco for the last ten years has been made either in Berlin or Paris.)

"What makes you think that El-Rogi worked in the French interests?" Asmassian asked.

I told him as concisely as possible the manifold

and overwhelming evidence. He did not dispute it, but shrugged his shoulders and turned to another subject.

"The Moors are barbarians. You can't imagine their cruelty. They flog people to death, burn out their eyes — why, I have seen a man dragged through this very street, tied to a horse's tail, till his brains were beaten out on the stones. They have no idea of the value of human life. They are cowards, too. They won't fight you hand to hand — no! They will shoot you from behind a tree, at a safe distance, or kill you while you sleep."

"Not unlike the bombardment of Casablanca by the French," I interjected.

"No! no!" he protested. "Another story of the Socco Chico. Did the waiter at the hotel tell you that, or a mule-boy?"

"No. It was told me by a very estimable English gentleman, a medical missionary, who was there during the bombardment. He told me how at three o'clock in the morning he was awakened by a legation guard and told to take his family to the European quarter of the town, and how before they could reach the place of



Photograph by Geo. E. Holt, Tangier.

THE SHOP OF A LEATHER MERCHANT



safety the war-ships in the harbor began the bombardment, long before any of the sleeping natives could be warned. And he told me how the next day, as he went from house to house, trying to give what medical aid he could, he found many people dead in their beds, killed while they slept — from a safe distance, too, just as you say these cruel, cowardly Moors do."

"Oh! Grossly exaggerated."

"No. Because there is the evidence of other estimable eye-witnesses."

Again Asmassian shrugged his shoulders and turned the subject.

"If the Moors were left to themselves, they would never make any progress. The French will come and build railways and factories, open mines, make it a rich and prosperous country."

"But if the Moors don't want to be rich and prosperous? You know it really is their country. What right have the French — "

"They don't want progress because they are stupid," Asmassian interrupted. "France must open the country for the good of the Moors themselves. Otherwise they will just

rot to pieces. France must be their older brother and educate them — civilize them. Just what has been done in Algeria. Think how much better off the Algerians are since the French came there! Now, the country is orderly. There is justice in the land, and there are schools. They are teaching them to read and write."

"Yes," I interrupted again, "and teaching them to drink absinthe and all manner of other vicious by-products of civilization. And now they are planning to force the natives to enter the army. I have been in Algeria long enough to know. You would have hard work to find a dozen natives who think the French rule has been good for them. They are dying off. It means extinction."

"Just what happened to your Indians in America," Asmassian said, as though he had scored a point.

"Yes; but we don't pretend that it was good for the Indians. You were trying to say that French rule would be good for the Moors."

Once more Asmassian shrugged his shoulders and changed his ground.

"After all, it is just the struggle for existence. If the Moors cannot progress, they will have to get out of the way of those who can. It is not humanitarianism, it is evolution. The French are the most civilized nation in the neighborhood, the Moors the most barbarian. They will be forced to make way."

"I am afraid so," I said.

"You do not like the French?"

"Oh, yes, I do — in France. I agree with you; they are the most civilized nation, not only in the neighborhood, but in the world. I would rather live in Paris, I think, than anywhere. But the Frenchmen I find in their colonies, and here in Morocco, do not seem to be very good samples of civilization."

Then the apprentice came with the coffee. Asmassian sent him off again on another mission; as he spoke in Arabic, I could not understand it.

"Your way of looking at it," he went on as he drank his coffee — it was so hot I could not even sip it — "may be the best way for a journalist. It makes a better story, I suppose, to find fault, to tell about outrages and so forth.

But it is not the right way, the philosophical way. Your view of the matter is too small. It is not a question of one nation against another, but of the human race. You cannot judge it in relation to our time, our generation. It is a matter of all time, of generations to come. Here is a wonderful country, richer even than your America; a wonderful climate, wonderfully fertile soil. These Moors scratch it with a stick and it supports millions of them. With irrigation and scientific agriculture it would give food to billions on billions. The hill country is full of water power sites. Electricity will be cheap as air here some day. Morocco will be a great manufacturing country. It is probably the richest mineral country in the world." (Ten minutes before Asmassian had denied this.) "The mountains are loaded with ore, copper, lead, mercury, gold. I have seen streams in the interior iridescent with petroleum. In future generations, when the soil of France is exhausted, when the coal gives out in England, when your American oil wells have run dry, Morocco will be the centre of a new and greater civilization. That is the vision before the eyes

of the French statesmen. The only thing in the way of its realization is the jealousy between the Powers. Each Power wants its share in the credit of this great work of civilization. But this jealousy will be overcome. The dream will be realized. What do the means matter? Human nature is Jesuitical. It always has been, it always will be. Much destructive evil has preceded every constructive good. The steam loom was hard on the hand spinners. But do you want to go back to homespun? The civilizing of Morocco will be hard on the Moors. It may mean their extinction. What does the trickery of the European diplomats matter? What does the bombardment of a half dozen Casablancas matter?"

"You admit these things that you denied a minute ago?"

"No, I know nothing about them. They may be true or not. But I say that they are fly-specks — infinitesimal compared to the dream of a regenerated, civilized Morocco.

"Do you want your readers to have a true understanding of the Moroccan question? Show

them, on one side, immense natural resources going to waste because the Moors are utterly incapable of developing them, fanatically unwilling that others should develop them. On the other side show them France—standing for progressive civilization — saying that Morocco does not belong to the Moors, but to the world, to generations yet unborn. It is their duty to spread civilization. The end is humanitarian in the largest sense. There may be ugly necessities in the accomplishment of this great work for the race. But the end is the important thing.

"The French people have a duty to humanity. They will perform it as humanely as possible, but they will perform it. It is costing them much sacrifice in blood and gold. They should be honored for the great part they are playing. Their Moroccan policy is a noble act of disinterested patriotism to the race idea of civilization."

"That is very eloquent," I said. "But is it true?"

"Why, what do you mean? Of course, it is true!"

"No, it does not look true to me. In the

first place, the French people as a whole do not give a snap of the finger for Morocco. Take the bulk of the nation — the peasants. If they think about Morocco at all, it is to hope that the war charges will not fall so heavily on them as they did in the acquisition of Algeria and Indo-China; to hope that relatively few of their children will be killed in the campaign. The industrial class is violently opposed to "the Moroccan Policy" of the government. The elements of French society which are pushing the government into this adventure are very few and small — anything but disinterested. There is not one in a hundred thousand who dreams this oratorical dream of yours. Ambitious army officers see in a Moroccan campaign a chance for decorations and promotions. The underpaid bureaucratic officials foresee in a future colony of Morocco many fat administrative positions — like those they now enjoy in Algeria. The diplomats dream of a North African Empire — Napoleon's old scheme of turning the Mediterranean into a French lake. But the really powerful element are capitalists who look hungrily at all this neglected wealth.

They dream dreams, — but not your dream of racial progress. They dream of a rich mine in a country where there are no unions, and where labor costs less than a franc a day. No. The motives that push France into such atrocities as the massacre at Casablanca are not visions of a glorious advance of civilization, but vulgar, selfish greed — greed for decorations, greed for money, but greed."

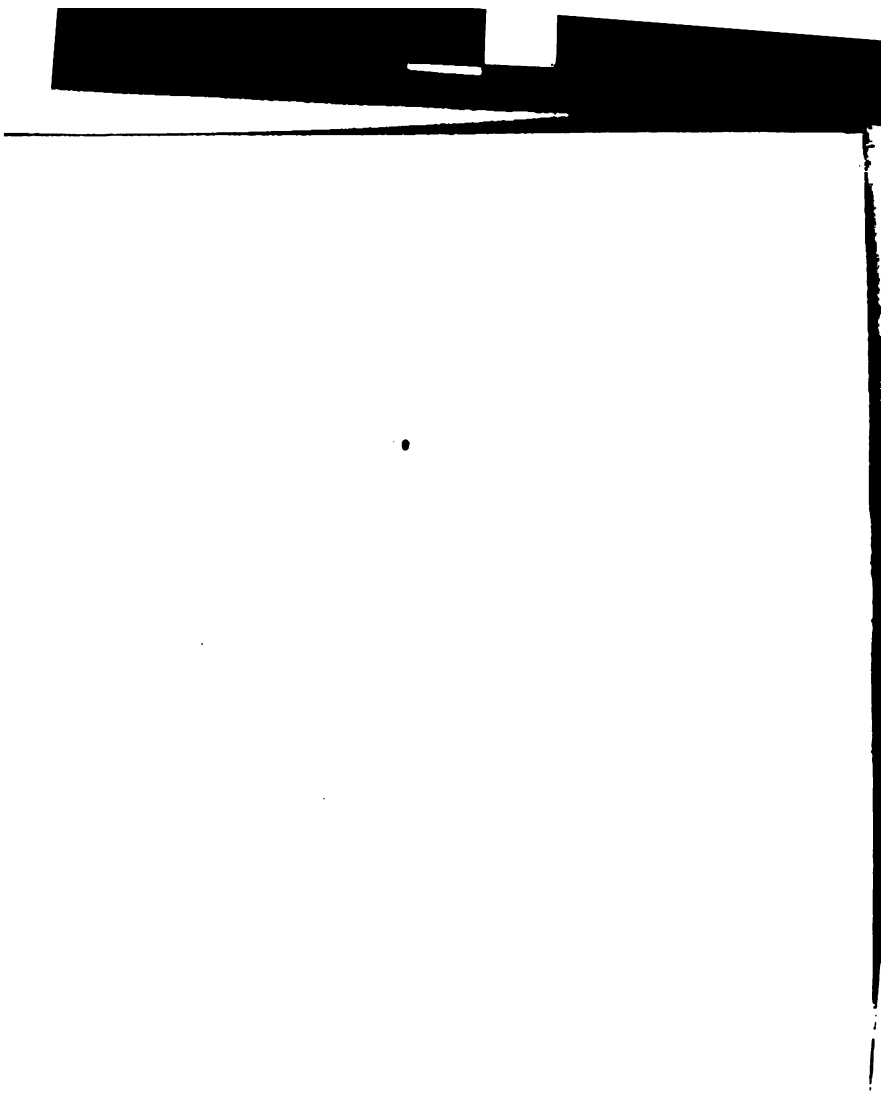
Once more Asmassian shrugged his shoulders and admitted my contention.

"But that does not affect the result. I am as little interested in motives as I am in means. The result will benefit the race. The men who invented the steam loom, of which I spoke a minute ago, did not do it that you or I might dress cheaply in fine clothes, but to make themselves rich. We enjoy the benefit, — wear better clothes than our fathers, — and what does it matter to us that this invention meant suffering, starvation, to the hand-spinners? What does it matter that the motive back of it was greed for wealth? And our great-grandchildren who live in or off of a progressive Morocco will worry no more over the fact that



Photograph by Geo. E. Holt, Tangier.

A STREET IN TANGIER



the men of our day who civilized the country were selfish and brutal. Call the French diplomats who tricked Abd ul-Aziz treacherous Judases, if you will. But remember without Judas there would have been no Christianity. Call them Roman butchers; but without the Romans and their Cross, where would our Scheme of Salvation be?"

"Are you a Christian?" I asked.

"Yes, of course, I am an Armenian."

I could not think of anything more to say and was preparing to leave when Asmassian suddenly pulled my coat sleeve and pointed up the street.

"Look!" he said. "Here comes Madame du Place!"

The narrow street was crowded with over-laden asses, half-nude negroes from the Sudan, white-robed *ulema*, Jews in their greasy black skull-caps and kaftans, peasant women with green osier baskets of garden products, appallingly distorted beggars. And coming down through this Oriental phantasmagoria, dominating it all, was a Frenchwoman — a *Parisienne*. She might have passed unnoticed on one of the

Grand Boulevards, but here she stood out by contrast, compelling attention. I do not think she was very pretty, but so well gowned, so utterly European, that she certainly looked attractive. To one who had lived long in so out-of-the-way a place as Tangier she would be wonderfully seductive. The rakish angle of her hat, the cosmetics on her face, indicated that such was her profession. She held her skirts high as she tripped down the muddy street. Women barelegged to the knee were passing on all sides, but the fine silk hosiery over her dainty ankles was quite another thing. She nodded to Asmassian in a way of easy-going good fellowship.

"Who is she?" I asked.

Somehow the oiliness of Asmassian's face became more evident, his little pig eyes drew into his face, and the leer on his face became accentuated.

"Madame du Place. Ah, she is the queen of them all! Witty, intelligent, *charmante!* Why is she here? Who knows? Perhaps some trouble at home. She has a villa up on the Marshan. I'll take you up to see her some

night. I know her well. When shall it be? How about to-morrow night?"

Quite suddenly I remembered that I had disliked this man at first sight. So, parrying his invitation to meet Madame du Place and thanking him hurriedly for his hospitality, I left.

That night I dined with an English family on the Marshan. When I arrived, my host, a man to whom I was already indebted for many courtesies, took me aside into his study.

"You have been indiscreet," he said. "Look at this. It came half an hour ago. Some hundred people are discussing it by now."

It was a note from a prominent Moor to whom my host had introduced me. It was laconic. "Has your American friend sold out? He spent the afternoon in Asmassian's shop."

"Who in thunder *is* Asmassian?" I asked in bewilderment.

"He is Chief of the French Secret Service here."

"And Madame du Place?" I asked.

My host, who seemed to have considered the

matter as a joke so far, suddenly became serious.

"My word! you haven't mixed up with her, have you?"

"No," I said, "but Asmassian trotted her out for my inspection and offered to introduce me."

My host gave a sketch of the lady. She had first come into prominence by ruining the career of a young English attaché at St. Petersburg. After a year or two of seclusion she had given a serious fall to a distinguished old Austrian diplomat at Constantinople. This exploit put every chancellery in Europe on its guard. She lived some time in Paris, but was too well known to be of much use to the Foreign Office. So they had sent her down to Tangier, where she had served France and the Cause of Civilization as the mistress of the unfortunate El-Rogi.

"But," I gasped, "even if all this fantastic story is true, why should the French government set these people on my trail? Why? oh, why, should a lady who has stalked such big game waste her time on a mere journalist?"

"Madame du Place, if you make friends with her," my host said, "will doubtless help you write your articles. She is clever enough. And if she recommended it, the government would certainly give you the Legion of Honor. Public opinion in a time like this is very valuable."

The only way in which I could rid myself of Asmassian's solicitations was by changing my café. They used more chicory in the dingy little *Café du Commerce*, but there I found more of the people to whom my English friend had introduced me.

TANGIER, 1910.



IX. THE BEST STORY I EVER HEARD

THE great market-place, or Sok, of Tangier is spread out on the hillside above the Fasci Gate.

There are many beautiful outlooks from about the city, but the view from the Sok — the moss-covered walls of the ancient citadel, the broad bay, the distant Pillars of Hercules, the gold and green hills of Spain across the Straits — is the best of all.

Thursday is the day set for the market. But all things in Mussuldom begin the day before. By noon Wednesday the Sok is in a turmoil. The trails leading in from the country are crowded with peasants, their mules and womenfolk laden with the produce of their fields. Old Father Time becomes young again. Within sight of the modern battle-ships of Gibraltar you find soft-footed camels laden with dates, black Nubian slaves running about with pigskins filled with water, asses half hidden beneath immense crates of cackling

chickens, bare-legged hill women plodding along under appalling loads of brushwood. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are there with their original flocks and herds.

There is much buying and selling Wednesday evening. All night long there is movement. Newcomers from the distant hills find squatters in their hereditary booths. The ensuing wrangle makes sleep impossible. As any one's business is every one's affair, the argument is voluminous and acrimonious. Then suddenly — in a way utterly beyond the comprehension of a mere infidel — the matter is arranged. "Silence like a poultice comes to heal the wounds of sound." The Sok falls asleep till the next eruption — caused by a new arrival or the stampede of a delirious jackass.

I happened to be walking through the Sok one night when a disturbance occurred which has become almost historic. It was caused by the foxhounds of the English Embassy. Some careless person left the kennels unlocked. Wandering about in the quest of adventure, the dogs struck the trail of a vagabond cat. She sought safety in the sleeping Sok. The

excitement caused by the passage of the pack of hounds — full cry and hullabaloo — through the hodgepodge of unstable tents and rickety booths, over the half-awakened superstitious Moors, was a thing to wonder over and admire.

"The Slave of God," who is my mule-boy, told me in the morning that Allah had sent seven devils — also many *jinoon* — to scourge the people for their sins. I was able to buy a Sous dagger from a frightened tribesman for its real value; if his conscience had not been wrung by the visitation, he would have charged me tenfold. The face of a sheik of the Anghera who had been sleeping in the very path of the devastation had been scratched by the feet of one of the *jinoon*. There were some of the *ulema* who, after an examination, maintained that the wounds had been given by an *afrit*, not a *jinn*. The old gentleman was so worried over the affair that he went to the Grand Mosque and divorced all his wives, vowing a year of celibacy.

But aside from such untoward accidents, the pandemonium reaches its height in the third hour after sunrise prayers on Thursday.



THE MOSS-COVERED WALLS OF THE ANCIENT CITADEL, TANGIER



By noon things are sold out. For an hour or more the people of the Sok figure up their accounts. They use a mystic system of arithmetic, the outward signs of which are little piles of stone, twigs set up on the ground, and resounding slaps on the knee. There is a proverb about being as sore as the knee of a lucky merchant. Business finished, the Sok looks about for entertainment. It is the harvest-time for mountebanks and story-tellers. The acrobats one sees in Tangier are not good; the cream of the profession is skimmed off for the music halls of Europe. But the story-tellers, protected by their impenetrable language, shine in their pristine glory.

Verbal literature and lyric music are the only arts held in high esteem by the Moors, and the story-tellers are conscious of their high calling. They are stamped with the stigmata of Bohemia. You could no more mistake them — once your eye has begun to catch the *nuances* of Moorish dress — than you could mistake the velveteen jacket, the flowing tie, and the unkempt hair of a Latin Quarter artist. Here, in Tangier, they tell their stories as they did in the Court

of the Caliphs of Bagdad; as they did in the Great Palace of Soulimon bin Daoud at Jerusalem; as they have done among all peoples since the invention of rudimentary speech.

The staccato thumping of a tom-tom attracts attention. The story-teller stands on the outskirts of the Sok. He looks profoundly up into the profundity of the sky. Beside him a slave boy squats on his heels and does the vulgar advertising work on the tom-tom, and also collects the coins which the story entices.

The market folk sit about in a great circle. Striking faces these countrymen have. There is not a flabby cheek, nor a double chin, nor a bleared eye among them. They gather in cliques: Riff tribesmen, the aristocrats of North Africa, their turbans made out of blue rifle-cases, for they would have you remember that they are warriors; Fasci, in flowing *jillabs*, broad strips of black and cream; Berbers from beyond the Great Atlas, their mantles of the soft fabric woven from the belly wool of mountain goats; *ulema* and divinity students in spotless white; here and there city men in gorgeous colors — burnt orange, olive-green

and blue — they have more fat on their faces, and begin to look as ill conditioned as Europeans.

Hardly a Thursday goes by that does not find me squatted in the circle, my riding-breeches marking me out as an infidel — a thing of shame. Abd Allah — "the Slave of God" — sits beside and translates the wonder stories of the Orient. It would be more correct to say he perverts them, for his conversation has all the elusive charm of a Chinese puzzle. He talks in a *lingua franca* which is one-third English, one-fourth French, the rest just words — a ragout of Spanish, Senegambian, Italian and Arabic. But I can get enough to note down the framework of the stories.

All this explained to me the scheme of the "Arabian Nights" tales. For the competition among the story-tellers of the Sok is keen. Often half a dozen are going at once. In order to keep up the interest, to prevent the audience going over to a rival, the first story before it is finished leads into an endless chain of others. If you wish to know the fate of the first hero, you must sit patient a long time, only to find

your curiosity entangled with half a dozen new ones.

We of the West have forgotten how to tell stories. We have learned to write them down. The printing-press has taught us how to can them. The charm of facial expression is lost — all the rich possibilities of tone and gesture. If our heroine is sad, we must write it down baldly, "She was sad." The longest, most intricate novel of Henry James could be told by a skilled teller in half an hour.

The art of Oriental literature, whether prose or poetry, and the two are seldom entirely divorced, is not the simple concoction of a plot nor the invention of a dainty conceit. It is more than all else the technique of presentation. The words are the least part of their artistry.

So one who does not know their language can find pleasure in the performance as pure pantomime. For Abd Allah's translations would be meaningless, utterly without charm, if it were not for the story-tellers' ability to portray by tone and gesture the spirit of their tales.

One day Abd Allah told me — painfully, having to repeat it a dozen times before I could sort out his meaning from the jumble of words — that Hadje Akmet bin Nassir el Mokri el Agadir, the most renowned story-teller of Morocco, had returned from his twelfth pilgrimage to Mecca and would perform the next market day in the Sok. The name was already familiar to me; so often as I had shown enthusiasm for a local story-teller, Abd Allah had shrugged his shoulders and said, "La! la! Signor! He is but camel-dung under the feet of the blessed Hadje Akmet."

I was early in the Sok that memorable afternoon. Although the great man had not come, his orchestra — eight coal-black Nubian boys in pure white *jillabs* — had already collected an immense circle. The regular story-tellers, knowing that competition was hopeless, had gathered about the orchestra. The Slave of God told me that Hadje Akmet would divide among them all the money thrown into the circle. "Is he not rich in the blessings of Allah, the Beneficent? He takes only jewels from the great Sultans."

At last a cavalcade came through the Fasci Gate. The nobility of Tangier had turned out in full feather. It was a brilliant company, to which Hadje Akmet, riding at the head, presented a striking contrast. His *jillab* was as faded and frayed as that of the poorest story-teller of the Sok.

"It is," said Abd Allah, "the same *jillab* to his all twelve pilgrimages he has worn. Even so, when the story is told, I will it kiss—yes — the fringe."

Of course Hadje Akmet's simplicity of manner, his bored disregard of those who would do him honor, may have been an elaborate affectation. But why should a man whose name is known in the remotest village of Mussuldom, whose art has been honored in the four great courts of Islam, who, within the shadow of the Holy Ka'aba, beside the revered tomb at Medina, had held spellbound men of a hundred nations, from the four corners of the earth, be moved by the homage of Tangier, the least of Mohammed's cities?

He was a wiry little man, his long beard streaked with gray, his face parched by the sun



Photograph by Geo. E. Holt, Tangier.

WATER CARRIERS ON THE BEACH AT TANGIER

[redacted]

of the Sahara, the sand-storms of Arabia, the cruel blizzards of Samarkand. His gray eyes were restless with having seen too many men, too many places. He jumped from his mule, scorning the hundred hands which proffered help, and entered the circle. He spread out his arms and bowed low towards Mecca. Then, picking idly at a two-stringed lute, looking out at something far beyond the horizon, he prayed, with rhyme and rhythm, under his breath, his words scarce audible.

"He say beautiful thanks at God for safe come home," Abd Allah whispered.

This finished, he sat down, his eyes closed. The negro boys beat wildly on their tom-toms, tore savagely at the strings of their viols. Some camels snorted and quarrelled in the distance. A brass bell tinkled sharply as a Sudanese water-carrier hastened up the slope to join the circle. But I have never seen men so silent.

When Hadje Akmet stood up, an audible sigh came from the tense audience. He twanged twice on his lute, and, standing immobile, expressionless, began to set the stage

for his drama. He finished his prologue and paused. In an instant he made his face, his hand, his whole body — even the folds of his worn *jillab* — speak Fear. His orchestra was stilled. In a harsh, raucous voice, shudderingly, he besought help. As suddenly he was silent again, twanging his lute. Then he took up the part of Cunning. Jealousy, Hilarious Mirth, Love, Murder, he visualized before us. Once, I am sure, he spoke of the full moon, the reflection of a group of date-palms on the pool of an oasis. Once he was riding a fleet Arabian stallion on a hot errand of love. Again he was sore athirst in the barren stretches of the Great Desert. Then the din of war pervaded the Sok — the clash of gleaming cimeters, the hum of arrows, the wail of death.

Twice I tried to make the Slave of God translate, poking him vigorously in the ribs. I might have whittled off his ears. Big-eyed, open-mouthed, as taut as a forestay in a gale, he scarcely breathed, so tight the spell held him.

But a deaf-mute could have seen the story, so plainly it was written on the circle of intense faces. They were plastic under the magic of

the spoken words. One did not have to hear, to feel the horror that froze those faces at Hadje Akmet's wish, the berserker fury he painted there, the pity he called up for the widows of the slain.

As each mood he conjured up was more tense, more hypnotic, it seemed that the spell must break, that the climax had come at last. But the wizard had himself as well as his audience in hand. In the short intervals when he let them breathe — as he twanged two, three, four chords on his lute — his face was emotionless and overwise, as though his art held for him no new thing to learn, no new triumph to hope for. Then in a flash the old face showed you a young maiden dancing for the first time before him whom she loved — showed you a leader of the Faithful lifting a thousand-footed charge over the ramparts of Unbelief.

It was wonderful — past any words of mine. The climax, when it came at last, left the circle torn and breathless. Hadje Akmet sat down, the tired, worn old man again, and from the forlorn tatters of his *jillab* drew out a slender *keef* pipe, and lit it with a European match.

Then he was lost in a surge of fanaticism struggling wildly to kiss his twelvefold holy robe. Somewhere in that turmoil was the Slave of God. He had forgotten me utterly. I caught one fleeting glimpse of him in the adoring throng which accompanied Hadje Akmet back to the city.

My anger at his deflection was in proportion to the mighty spell of the story-telling. I was sore bitten by curiosity to know what it had all been about. I was only sure that it was infinitely superior to the ordinary run of Sok stories. Late that night I discovered the deserter, drunk with *keef* smoking, in the *café* of his tribe. He sat sullenly in the corner and refused to come out.

On the morrow he came to my room as if nothing had happened.

"*Sidi*," he said, "this morning finer than to-morrow for too long ride up Jibel Kebir."

"Too" in Abd Allah's lingo means "very." If the eggs he buys are not rotten, he calls them "a too fine eat."

"No," I said; "this morning you tell me the story of Hadje Akmet, that I may write it down in my book."

"La!" he seemed decisive. "We go up Jibel Kebir. A too fine day."

"Guess again, thou son of Satan. We sit right here in this room and you tell me the tale of Hadje Akmet."

"La!" he grunted.

I became violent in my urging.

"It is not a story," he said, "which can be told to an Infidel."

I have beaten the Slave of God with my riding-crop. I have spit in the direction of the tomb of his grandmother. I have discharged him from my service. I have tempted him with a Winchester rifle. The Maxim Silencer on the end of it is indisputably an invention of the *jinoon*, a work of the Lower, Middle and High Magic. It would make him a considerable man in his village; more to be envied than the *ulema*, even on a par with the *kaid*. But he insists that the story of Hadje Akmet cannot be told to an infidel.

I am sure it was the best story I ever heard.

TANGIER, 1910.

X. THE MAGIC CARPET.

THE real name of the ship does not matter. We called her the *Magic Carpet.*

She was a big, lumbering freighter to which had been superadded a sort of camel's hump of cabins amidship. But the fitting of her up for "passenger service" had not improved her looks nor changed the character of her crew. The captain, it is true, came down to dinner in white linen. But when at work he was barefooted and profane, as the skipper of a cargo boat should be. We called her the *Magic Carpet* because we had never found a conveyance which carried one so far in so short a time.

At ten in the morning we were in Gibraltar harbor. Anchored in the basin at the foot of the great fortress rock were the flagship and several smaller units of the British Mediterranean fleet. As we were getting under way two ships came in, a big liner from America and a giant P. and O. boat from Hong-kong.

Whether one thinks of commerce — the meeting of merchandise from the ends of the earth — or of super-dreadnoughts and destroyers as most typical of our civilization, certainly Gibraltar harbor is one of the most modern spots on the globe.

In less than three hours we landed at Tangier — had travelled all the way back into the Old Testament. The armament of the average Moorish warrior is a crooked knife, and commerce is carried on beasts of burden. It is a long way indeed from ocean liners to transportation by mule and camel back.

I think it was the snake-charmer more than any one other thing which gave us the sense of having travelled an immense distance — his performance was at once so puerile and so solemn. Did he believe in his own magic? Certainly most of his audience were mystified by his legerdemain. I remember especially a group of shepherds from the Anghera hills, wrapped in their dirt-colored *jillabs;* they squatted on their heels and watched breathlessly. They were mightily mystified when the old faker blew red fire out of his nose.

The performance in itself would have delighted schoolboys at home. The audience — the circle of dark, tense faces — would have impressed the most *blasé* man of the West.

In many of the ways in which we are most grown up the people of Islam are still little children. A mechanical toy will interest a Prime Minister, but you cannot interest him in sanitation. At first one is inclined to despise them. But, on closer acquaintance, one is surprised to find that they are just as contemptuous of us. And gradually a realization grows that there are some departments of life which we have not yet begun to study in which their wisdom is already hoary. But, at all events, it is a long, long way from Gibraltar and its far-flung commerce to the marketplace of Tangier.

So, in the smoking-room, after dinner, we decided to call our ship the *Magic Carpet.*

"We" were the three men aboard to whom English, in its various dialects, was natural language.

There was Bateson, an egg-buyer with a Cockney tongue. His principal feature was an

amazingly long pair of drooping mustachios. There was almost always a drop of whiskey and soda hanging from either end. And when he shook his head in disagreement to anything, you longed for an umbrella. He had a "wife and kiddies" at home, but, being "on the road," he saw little of them. He had bought eggs for the London market in Siberia and Bulgaria, in Norway and Spain; he spoke all these languages fluently with a Cockney accent. The thing which had impressed him most in life and which he most liked to talk of was the Russian revolution. He had been in that forlorn land during the outbreaks of 1905 and 1906. And every night he told the story, with a wealth of gestures and invectives, of how the "bloody bounders," as he called those Russians who believed in the Rights of Man, had proclaimed a general strike, and how in consequence a whole shipment of eggs had rotted on his hands. His single-hearted devotion to his vocation was impressive. Wars and revolutions and pestilence — Mazagan, one of the best egg ports on the Morocco coast, was closed with bubonic plague — interested him

only so far as they affected the price of his commodity.

But he was a sympathetic soul, and every now and then he would try to comfort me. Of course my misfortune in not having been born an Englishman was overwhelming; but, after all, he would say in his strange dialect, the Yankees have built the best wind-jammers and written the best music of any nation on earth. I knew that fifty years ago our New England shipbuilders had been preëminent; but his tribute to our music puzzled me until he explained that "Home, Sweet Home" was the finest song in the language.

Binning was an Oxford man who had just failed to win a university fellowship, and so had failed utterly. If ever a man was built for one particular position and none other, it was Binning. He would have been an almost ideal Fellow. He would have sunk softly and contentedly into the rut. He would have known the index of his special subject by heart. He would have grown fat and flabby from lack of exercise, and a bit stoop-shouldered, and would have prided himself on his geniality.

But he had failed of this berth. He had struggled for a year or so as a teacher in boys' schools at home, and, failing at that too, he was now English master of a Jewish charity school in Morocco supported by the Alliance Israelite Universelle. His salary was fifty pounds a year and a room. By smoking very vile tobacco he could save enough to get home every other summer. I doubt if he taught Jewish lads very much. A pitiful little man, with frayed cuffs and shiny coat — and he would have made such a dignified and contented addition to the scenery in a university town! Naturally of a pleasant disposition, his gloomy life had embittered him. He cultivated stinging epigrams and sarcasm. It was he who called my attention to the drops of whiskey and soda on Bateson's mustache. And when Binning could think of nothing better to do, he would talk Spanish, throwing in unwarranted "h's" in imitation of Bateson, who never knew he was being jeered at.

I was the third of the little clique, and, in spite of my repeated explanations that I was born in a slave state, the Britishers insisted on calling me "the Yank."

Bateson ranked Kipling next — although a long way — below the author of "Home, Sweet Home," and this night, inspired, I suppose, by the afternoon in Tangier, he began to quote:

"For East is East and West is West—"

Binning interrupted him.

"And whenever the twain do meet, it makes a frightful mess." He waved his hand around to indicate the heterogeneous assembly in the *Magic Carpet's* smoking-room.

A group of Frenchmen were drinking unhealthy-colored syrups around a table where two officers, resplendent in blue jackets, red breeches, and gold lace, were playing dominoes. They were on their way to Casablanca to help in the overthrow of Morocco.

Some Spaniards were talking excitedly over a Cadiz newspaper they had bought on shore. Their drink was *aguardiente.*

Most interesting were two flaxen-haired Teutons who had just finished a silent game of chess and were opening a new bottle of Augustiner Brau. One of them was known to

be an agent of the Mannesmann Brothers, the firm of German steel manufacturers who have plunged themselves into notoriety and have almost plunged Europe into war by buying much mining property in Morocco. The reason why the Mannesmann Brothers should not buy land in Morocco is obscured by a great flow of diplomatic verbiage — in plain English, the French want those mines themselves. And so this German firm, formerly only known as the producer of high-grade steel and iron tubing, has become a figure in *Weltpolitik*. They have been speculating in the peace of Europe. The other German made it a point to approach every one on board and explain that he was a simple tourist. But, in spite of his mufti, the way he carried his shoulders and his stride marked him for an army officer.

At another table were two Jews. The younger was in English clothes. He might have been a clerk in a London exporting house, or possibly he was the modern son of the ancient man beside him. The older Jew wore the traditional costume of his race in Morocco; he presented a symbolization of political impo-

tence. His black tarboosh, his black kaftan and slippers, were outward marks of his civil disabilities. A Moor once explained to me that the Jews were forced to wear this costume so that the True Believers would know whom to spit at. And he wore these black stigmata of scorn even on board a European ship, where he might have discarded them. His face, his furtive eyes, his whole bearing and manner, were of obsequious humility.

And yet he exuded wealth. He might just as well have posed for a picture of Financial Power. His kaftan was of finest imported broadcloth. "We" also had suits of broadcloth — for state occasions. We valued them too highly to bring them out on this dirty coaster. For the old Jew it was his daily wear. He had rich rings, a massive watch-chain, and a girdle of cloth of gold. Such girdles are one of the most striking paradoxes of all our contradictory life. They are of unique fabric, woven only in the *mellahs* of Moroccan towns. There are no Ghettos in Europe, not even in Russia, so abjectly poverty-stricken, so oppressed — and nowhere is more costly fabric made.

The old Jew clothed in gorgeous humility and the young Jew in tweeds were the most placid-looking couple in the smoking-room. With the strange ability of their race to play all the colors on the wheel of chance, they cared very little whether French or German won, whether Morocco was to remain an independent empire or to fall. The Sultan is trying to extort higher taxes, which always makes money-lending lucrative. There is great profit in victualling the French army of invasion. Out of every thousand marks which the Germans are investing in mining rights a large percentage finds its way into the *mellahs*, into the little furnaces, where gold coin is melted down to make the fine wire from which are woven such sumptuous girdles as that which the old man wore.

There was a solitary man in the room, detached from any of the groups. He was a Moor, evidently a man of consequence in his community, probably a sheik of the Atlas Berbers, returning from his pilgrimage to Mecca. He sat uncomfortably but stoically on a European chair. He had thrown the cowl

of his *jillab* up over his turban, so that his finely cut features were shaded, but his large brown eyes glowed with pain and rage as he looked out on the company of Infidels who were, to use the Moorish phrase, " eating " his country. Drinkers of alcohol, gamblers with cards, usurers. Some of these foreigners who were waxing fat off his fatherland never prayed to God at all, used his name only in profanity, and some of them when they entered a church prayed to the image of a woman. It is small wonder that many devout Mussulmans believe that *Maseeh ed-dujjal* — the Antichrist — has come, and that the *Mahdi* must soon appear to reëstablish Islam and make ready the world for the Last Day.

The donkey-engine up forward began to snort and grunt over the anchor. Bateson ordered another whiskey and soda. Binning and I went out and leaned over the rail. The Happy Moon of Shoowal, which follows Ramadan, the Moon of Fasting, was just coming up over the red-brown Anghera hills. Its faery sheen crept down the side of the mountain back of Tangier, and at last flooded the white and blue

walls of the city. It is hard to believe that this ineffable African moon is the same as the one we see through the smoke and dust at home.

"Even the French, with their greedy inventiveness," Binning said, "have not discovered how to make money out of the moon. So at least one of Morocco's ancient splendors is still safe."

The glory of the night held us there on deck until the *Magic Carpet* had rounded the corner of the continent at Cape Spartel and was headed south.

There is a strange fascination to the ships which ply on the byways of the sea. There is hardly an item, except the salt flavor of the air, to remind one of the great floating hotels which cross the Atlantic. The advertisement of our ship emphasized two things: (1) she carried a stewardess; (2) the cooking was in charge of a chef from a first-class hotel. The first was true. But, although they had once had a cook on board, he had deserted at Cadiz several voyages before. Since then there had been only one kind of dessert served at dinner — plum duff. Those who could afford it bought

bread and fruit ashore and ate nothing from the ship's galley except boiled eggs. But if the dining saloon had little to offer in the way of variety, the bar in the smoking-room had one of the most complex assortment of beverages I have ever seen. If an Eskimo had dropped in suddenly and asked for a tall glass of whale oil, I think the multilingual steward would have understood his order and served him.

The "promenade" deck was washed down with some regularity. Instead of the steamer chairs which the traveller on the highways of the sea is apt to think inevitably associated with ocean voyages, the *Magic Carpet* carried great wickerwork chairs of Madeira make. The greatest difference — except, of course, the passengers — is that the coasters do most of their travelling at night. If the weather is good, it is one day in each port and a night's run to the next. But if the sea is running high, you sometimes have to wait days on end before unloading, for there are no harbors on the Morocco coast.

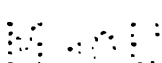
We made Casablanca at sunrise. It is the busiest port of all. The town, after a very long



Photograph by Miss Walker, Mogador.

MOGADOR







sleep, has suddenly waked to feverish life; it is the base of the French army of subjugation. We found two transports in the offing with reën-forcements of Algerian troops. A big freighter out of Marseilles lay next us, her hold full of braying army mules. Two Paquet & Cie. steamers were discharging commissary and hospital stores. And while we were break-fasting a little English side-wheeler, chartered by the French Government, came in, her deck close packed with light mountain artillery, her hold full of ammunition. The military author-ities were using all but one derrick on the mole, so our cargo of Manchester cotton, Chinese tea and French sugar was unloaded slowly.

It was this morning at Casablanca that I made the acquaintance of Mrs. Brail. There were five women aboard; two were Spanish, fat and voluble, one was a Jewess, fat and silent. And then there were Mrs. Brail and Mlle. Potin. The Frenchwoman was evidently richer. But Mrs. Brail was married. She was going out to join her husband, a British vice-consul who had recently been appointed to a miasmic, fever-ridden African port. He

had been at his post a month or more, trying to make it habitable for her. It was her first excursion beyond the realm of electric lights and newspapers. Mlle. Potin was going out to rescue from loneliness a young French officer who was instructing the native police in Mogador. Mrs. Brail was a small, rather plump, wren-like creature. Her clothes as well as her form suggested the comparison. Mlle. Potin was more sprightly. She had a loud laugh which combined very fittingly with her gowns and her rakish hat.

But the strongest contrast between the two women lay in their eyes. There was a noticeable timidity in Mrs. Brail's eyes, which would not entirely have vanished if Mr. Brail had been at her side. She seemed afraid of seeing things which her mother had not seen, things which are not written down in the book of Good Form. Yet they were merry eyes. She was not at all afraid of such things as the African jungle, of lions or fever.

Binning, commenting on the eyes of Mlle. Potin, said: "When the great Jahwa looked on this world he had created, he saw that it

was good. That young lady has seen a lot of things which Jahwa failed to notice."

But, in spite of the fact that her eyes looked as though they had not been amazed or shocked for a very long while, they also were merry. There were amusing little wrinkles about them which seemed only an extension of the twinkles within.

Bateson quoted something from Kipling about the difference between the Colonel's Lady and Mrs. O'Grady extending little deeper than the former's cosmetics, and Binning delivered himself of a philippic against snobbery.

"Mrs. Brail," he said, "will find respectability a dreary companion alone here on board. All day long she'll sit here sewing or reading and thanking God that she is not as other women are. And every few minutes she'll get up and hang over the rail and wish she had the other woman's liberty, wish she could go ashore and have a decent meal. She'll look as if she was enjoying her propriety and good name, but she'll be wondering what Mlle. Potin is doing, and down in the bottom of her heart she'll be envying her."

And it seemed as if there was some truth in Binning's tirade, for Mrs. Brail, looking very lonely indeed, was watching Mlle. Potin and the French clamoring merrily down into a bumboat.

"Well," I said, "she'll not be forced to regret her respectability because no one asked her to go ashore. I haven't been presented to her, and I'll probably be snubbed, but I feel it's a duty — my little contribution to the maintenance of good living."

Binning said I was a fool and Bateson retreated to the smoking-room in dismay. But, hat in hand, I approached Mrs. Brail. An old proverb says that if you can make a woman laugh, your point is won. So I based my brief on the impropriety of her staying alone on the ship with a lot of strange officers. It is not only a man's heart which can be won by way of the stomach, so I also played up the superior cuisine ashore. I proposed to take Binning along to interpret for her in case she had trouble understanding my American dialect. It was touch and go for a few minutes, and then she smiled.

It was an exciting scramble along the mole,

between bales of antiseptic bandages and dismembered field artillery. The whole affair was immensely complicated by plunging, braying mules. To a French mule who has grown to maturity with no greater adventures than occasional thefts of carrots it is decidedly disturbing to be taken on a long sea trip, be whipped out of the ship's hold by a derrick, swung about for a while in the air, lowered into a pitching small boat, and then, after being swung once more into the air, to find himself again on solid earth. I was heartily anxious to get away. The French are so careless about explosives, and if some of the flying heels of those joyful mules should have struck the business end of a lyddite shell —. But Mrs. Brail wanted to stop and gaze at some coal-black Negro soldiers of a Senegambian regiment. They looked, she said, just like the people in the pictures her husband sent her.

We strolled about in the bazaars. Mrs. Brail was happily able to buy some knitting-needles, a supply of which she had forgotten to secure in London. This little purchase seemed to render her prospect of a year under the equator

decidedly more pleasant. Every few minutes she would remember it and say how glad she was to have found them.

The *déjeuner* at the French hotel was good, and afterwards we had a donkey ride out to an orange grove. We were tired and dusty as we were rowed out to the boat in the red glow of the African sunset.

"It is almost enough to make a man an optimist," Binning said, after Mrs. Brail had prettily stammered out her thanks, "to realize how much real enjoyment one can find in this world which is innocent. That is one of the striking differences," he went on, "between life and literature. You couldn't make a story out of our afternoon ashore. Nothing happened which she can't tell her husband, and what a woman will tell her husband doesn't interest the 'average reader.'"

His cynicism was interrupted by the arrival of another bumboat. Mlle. Potin came up the ladder alone.

"*Bonsoir, Mam'zelle.* Have you enjoyed yourself?" I asked.

"O la! la!" she cried, gleefully. "You

speak French? All my friends have gone ashore here. I have no one to talk to all the way to Mogador."

So after supper that evening Bateson drank his nightcap alone. Binning talked to Mrs. Brail on the port deck, and I tried to revive my French on the starboard.

Cunninghame Graham, in his biting satire, "Bristol Fashion," says: "Men's minds are built in reason-tight compartments and what they do but little influences them, for the real life we live is one of thought." And he goes on to explain how people who seem, because of their acts, very bad indeed, may in this hidden, interior life be really good.

It is far from a new idea. But although the Church has condemned the heresy as antinomianism, no thought which has so continually cropped out in the race's history can be wholly false. And so, in a strange way which is very hard to express, I think Fifi, as Binning disrespectfully called Mlle. Potin, was a good woman.

"*La vie est dure*" was a phrase ever on her lips. If she could have grasped this sorry

scheme of things entire and moulded it nearer to her heart's desire, I am quite sure she would have eliminated the ancient profession to which she belonged. And as I listened to her chatter I began to speculate on what changes she would have to make in the world in order to bring it nearer her ideal. I do not think she would have had to change herself very much. The pressure of her remoulding hand would have been felt most strongly by the masculine side of society.

But perhaps I am attributing to the lady a broader programme of reform than she had really in mind. She did not seem much given to speculative thought. But of one thing I am quite sure. She was glad of an amateur friend, glad to find some one with whom to while away the long hours abroad who was willing to ignore her profession.

She told me stories about the little Norman village of Vernon, where she had been born. I had stopped there once overnight on a tramping trip. She told me of the school, and how one year she had won the Rosary. She told me of the lure of the theatre, and how she had

come to Paris and struggled up to the position of first soprano at the Folie Bergère, and how a Russian Grand Duke — And of course very little of it was true, unless Cunninghame Graham is right — that our real life is the one we wish and dream of.

The next morning, as every one else from her table had left, the steward moved Mlle. Potin to a seat next to Mrs. Brail, and so they began to speak. It was the Englishwoman's first trip from home, but the *Magic Carpet* had already carried us into that strange borderland whose citizens have no "past," where it is impolite to ask what any one's name was at home or why one left, where there are no social distinctions. I do not think Mrs. Brail was conscious of her new citizenship, only she felt that it would be ludicrous to bring the conventions of an English village on board an African coaster.

It was the next day, at Saffi, a white-walled Moorish town clustered about a gray sixteenth-century Portuguese fortress, that the bare speaking acquaintance between the two women became intimate.

Towards sundown there was a twanging of *ginbris*, a beating of tom-toms, on the lower deck. We all hurried aft to see what was afoot. Among the steerage passengers there was a troupe of native entertainers. There was a white-haired old patriarch, and three young lads who were acrobats and dancers. The other deck passengers, Moors and poorer Jews, formed a circle about the performers, and we from the first cabin looked down on it all.

Mlle. Potin and I were on the port side. Presently the chief engineer touched my arm.

"What's that chap down there by the forward hatch doing — the one in a blue *jillab?*"

I watched the fellow closely. He was sitting on a coil of wire rope and very slowly turning himself around.

"I give it up."

"Well," the chief said, with a grin, "when he gets up, that cable he's sitting on will be wound around him inside the *jillab*. He's one of the fellows who came on to handle cargo. We've lost many a fathom of good cable that way. I've tipped off the first officer. If you want to see some fun, keep an eye on him."

I translated to Mlle. Potin, and her eyes gleamed. There is a mystic sort of brotherhood among all those who prey. As shooting big game is to playing marbles, so is a man hunt to any other sport.

The tom-toms kept up their beating. The reed instruments wailed. The little boys went through their contortions. The man in the blue *jillab* continued to revolve slowly on the coil of cable. The first officer stood by the starboard rail attending to the loading of the last lighter. He would wave his hand, the cogs of the donkey-engine would rasp, and up would come a bale of cloth. He would check it off in his book as it went over the rail, curse a little to hurry the work, and take a quick look at the Moor in the blue *jillab*.

Standing there watching, sympathy for the hunted came to us strongly.

"*Il n'a pas de chance*," Mlle. Potin said, regretfully.

The last bale had come up out of the hold; the ship's crew were closing the hatch. The Moors who had come on board to help in the unloading were clambering over the side, down

a knotted rope into the lighter. The first officer, trying to look unconcerned, was holding a stout belaying-pin in his hand.

The Moorish thief got up slowly. As the chief had said, the wire cable had disappeared. I know I wanted to warn the poor beggar, and so did Mlle. Potin. Perhaps by some sort of thought transference we did. More probably he saw the belaying-pin in the mate's hand, and his guilty conscience did the rest. At all events, he suddenly decided to jump for it, instead of going down the rope and so passing close to danger. It was not more than ten or twelve feet from the rail to the high poop of the lighter. We were already under way, and, once off the ship, he would be safe. As he balanced himself on the rail, the mate yelled and heaved the belaying-pin at him. It whistled close to his head, and the Moor jumped.

We who understood the affair rushed over to starboard to see the outcome. It would have been an easy jump under ordinary circumstances. But with a hundred odd pounds of steel wire about his waist it was a different thing. He landed fairly on the little steersman's

deck. His foot slipped a bit; he struggled to gain his balance. The weight was too much for him; with an ear-rending shriek, he tottered over the edge. The steersman grabbed at his clothes, but the time-worn *jillab* tore; there was a second shriek and a splash.

A paralysis fell on all of us as we watched the air bubbles which came up through the water with spasmodic irregularity.

"Why doesn't somebody save him?" Mrs. Brail sobbed.

Save him? A hundredweight of steel about him in forty feet of water? Davy Jones's locker had closed over him with a click.

At the cry of "Man overboard!" the engines had stopped. The lighter had been cast off just as the Moor jumped, and his fellow-workers, some of whom probably expected to share the proceeds of his theft, hung over its side watching the bubbles come up. We stood by for several minutes — until the lightermen got out their sweeps and started shoreward — then two bells clanged down in the engine-room and we started on our way.

A sharp exclamation from Binning called my

attention to Mrs. Brail, who had crumpled up on the deck. Somebody called "Stewardess!" But Mlle. Potin had already brushed aside the men who were trying to help and had the fainting woman's head in her lap.

"Carry her to her room," she said.

Binning and I stooped down awkwardly to lift her; but Bateson intervened.

"Hi say, hi've got a wife. Hi knows how to carry a lidy."

And, shaking the whiskey and soda out of his mustachios, he picked her up as if she had been a crate of eggs. The soiled and dilapidated individual who called himself the chief steward rushed up with the news that the stewardess was drunk. Mlle. Potin said she would take care of Mrs. Brail.

Later in the evening Binning and I were pacing the deck, and as we passed Mrs. Brail's porthole we could hear the Frenchwoman singing a soft Norman lullaby. Binning was unusually silent. The cynicism which ordinarily came so glibly to his lips did not seem to fit the occasion.

The next morning at breakfast Mlle. Potin

was arrayed in a more gorgeous gown than we had yet seen. Her hat was ten degrees more rakish than any she had worn so far. Mogador was already in sight; she had reached her journey's end.

When we came on deck, we were passing in between the island and the town. It is the most beautiful of the Moroccan ports. The Moors call it "*Es-Suira*," which is the affectionate diminutive of their word for a picture. As I was leaning over the rail, filling my lungs with fresh air, trying to get rid of the taste of vile coffee and marvelling at the weird beauty of the high-flung surf against the century-old fortress walls, Mlle. Potin came to my side.

"My friend," she said, "I have a favor to ask. In a few minutes my officer will come aboard to take me ashore. Will you keep the English lady on the other side of the boat? I would not like her to see — you understand?"

And so, as we dropped anchor and our starboard side swung round towards the city, I established Mrs. Brail in a big wicker chair to port and told her the legend of the deserted mosque on the island, and of the great prison

there and of the rebels for whom it was built, and of Kaïd Omar, the Governor of the island, who lives there alone with two little boys and gets a salary of ten dollars a year, to prevent smuggling, and is getting rapidly rich off his contraband trade. When I ran out of yarns, we fell silent for a while. Presently Mrs. Brail remarked that this is a strange world.

"Mlle. Potin," I replied, "calls it a hard world."

"She is a strange woman."

"Yes," I said, "but not a hard one."

"No — not hard," Mrs. Brail agreed.

"I wonder — " she began after a pause. "It makes one wonder —

"It's all so very different," she began again, "and so far away, it makes one wonder — "

But Binning came up, and so what might have been a very interesting speculation was interrupted. Mlle. Potin had had plenty of time to get ashore, and I also was landing at Mogador, so I got up to make my adieux.

After I had seen my bags safely in the bumboat, I shook hands again at the head of the ladder.

"I hope we meet again some time," she called down after me, "at home."

I waved my hand.

But probably Mrs. Brail would be quite uninteresting at home.

MOGADOR, MOROCCO, 1911.

XI. HOUSEKEEPING IN MOGADOR

IT was once my good fortune to do a considerable service to a Moorish gentleman named Si Abd el-Kader bin Hussein. When he heard of my plan to spend the winter in Mogador, he gave me a letter of introduction to his brother-in-law, Hadje Omar Azral. "Besides his own house," Si Abd el-Kader told me, "he has a smaller one with a garden, which he will let you have, and he will find you a servant."

When the steamer brought me to Mogador and I had deposited my bags at the one hotel, I set out to find Hadje Omar. The best I could do was to locate his shop, which was locked and barred, and an acquaintance of his, who said he was in the country, and — *inch Allah* — would return in some days. I arranged to have my letter sent to him.

As the charges at the hotel are ruinous, the beds lumpy and the food tasteless, I set out house-hunting on my own responsibility the next morning. Every European to whom I

had introductions told me that it was very difficult to find suitable quarters. The last few months had seen a great increase in the number of foreigners. A couple of years ago there were hardly half a dozen Christian families. Within that time about twenty French families have come in and as many more unmarried men of all races. In the old days the foreigners had to live in the Kasba, or fortress quarter, but now they have overflowed into the Moorish city, and some have been unable to find any house except in the very dirty Jewish *Mellah*.

Coming back to the hotel, tired and hot and almost discouraged, I found Hadje Omar waiting for me. My letter had reached him the previous night, and he had hurried back to welcome me. He was well along towards fifty, thick-set and muscular — another ten pounds and he would have been corpulent. His expensive blue *jillab* and his immense turban marked him for a man of family and consideration. He could speak nothing but Arabic, but he had brought with him a young man who introduced himself in rather disjointed English as Muley Khamedo bin Jerid el-Krakeb.

He was still in the twenties; he had not yet begun to fill out. As he wore no turban, he was evidently unmarried. With the exception of his red *tarboosh* and a sort of vest of an indefinite color between cream and light blue, all his flowing garments were white. His title of "Muley" showed that he was a Shareef, a descendant of the Prophet. There are two families of the Holy Blood in Morocco, the Filali, to whom the reigning dynasty belongs, and the Idreesi. Muley Khamedo's white skin marked him as a member of the latter stock, for the Filali have intermarried with Negresses. In his broken English, helped out in crises by more fluent French, he made a little speech:

"Hadje Omar has read the letter of Si Abd el-Kader. The friend of his brother-in-law is his friend. He is your servant. You are his two eyes and his right hand. He begs that you will honor him and his humble house by eating now a meal with him. He has very little to offer, but all is yours. And when you have eaten, you will say what you desire and it shall be yours."

So off we started to Hadje Omar's house.

While turning bewildering corners, stepping over mud puddles, and dodging camels laden with thorny firewood, the old gentleman and I exchanged flowery compliments by way of Muley Khamedo.

At length we came to a blue — a shriekingly blue — door in a whitewashed wall. Hadje Omar banged the ponderous knocker and a female voice asked who was there. The Shareef motioned me to sit down on the settee which is built into the wall beside the door of almost every Moorish house, for entering one of them is a tedious affair. After Hadje Omar had assured the voice that it was really he, the master of the house, there was a grating of bolts and bars and he disappeared within. It took him at least ten minutes to stow away his women folk, and then he opened the door and asked me to enter. Up three flights of whitewashed stairs, past several closed doors all painted the same dizzy blue, we came to a large room, opening by a beautiful Moorish arch on to the flat roof. But, as the Moors value privacy more than scenery, the roof was surrounded by a five-foot wall. By standing on

tiptoe I could see out across the bay to where the Atlantic rollers were piling up twenty feet of spray on the little island.

The reception-room, like most of those I have seen in the houses of well-to-do Moors, was furnished with a hodgepodge of tawdry European trinkets and articles of real beauty and worth. Prominent on the wall was an arabesque bracket of carved and painted wood, a fine specimen of native craftsmanship. On it was a cheap and formless German clock. The minute hand and pendulum were broken; so the hour hand, with a great clatter and buzz raced around at ten times its legitimate speed. The floor was covered with rugs from Rabat, of gorgeous but unlovely colors.

Around three sides of the room was a low divan. Most of it was covered with a worn, time-tempered damask of old gold and greens. It looked to me like a mediæval Italian fabric, probably the spoil from some long-forgotten raid of the Barbary corsairs. It would be almost above price at home. But Hadje Omar did not know its history and was surprised when I admired it. He was much prouder of a gaudy,

satin-covered quilt of modern English make which covered the place of honor on the divan. You could buy one like it in a New York department store for $3.47.

When we were seated, a coal-black slave boy named Peace brought us the *tass* for hand-washing. It was an elaborate brass basin, with a perforated false bottom, through which the soiled water runs out of sight. The *tass* is one of the most important utensils of a Moorish household. This one of Hadje Omar's was an heirloom, beautifully chased in the ancient fashion. But the kettle from which the little boy poured warm water over our hands was of cheap blue enamel ware.

Washing with the Moors is a ceremonial closely connected with religion. They consider us decidedly lacking in cleanliness. After all, a really scrupulous person would rather eat with his fingers which he himself had washed, than with a knife and fork which some servant was supposed to have washed. Their custom of leaving their shoes in the vestibule is a sanitary precaution which we of the West will some day adopt. I have seldom felt so uncomfortably

soiled as I did that first day at Hadje Omar's. I had been walking all the morning in the heat and dust of the street, and when I took off my low shoes, my hose were not nearly so fit to be seen as my host's bare feet.

The meal was decidedly more savory than the alleged English cooking at the hotel. But of more importance to me, from my house-hunting point of view, was the conversation. I was to these two Moors a curiosity which I would not have been to Turks or Egyptians. I was, in their phraseology, a *taleb*, one "learned in the law." I have often been in Mohammedan countries, and I have studied their religion as far as may be through translations. The profounder students of Arabic and Orientalism do not come to Morocco. The reason, I suppose, is that the language here is a debased dialect. But while Mussulmans of more Eastern lands are familiar with Christian scholars, students of their language and laws and customs, the Moors have taken their idea of Europeans from illiterate traders and soldiers. Neither Hadje Omar nor Muley Khamedo had ever before encountered an Infidel who was familiar

with the Koran or the Life of the Prophet. So besides being the bearer of a letter of introduction, I became also a person of note on my own account. And I am sure that it was the latter as much as the former reason that explained their subsequent courtesies to me.

When we had finished our mint-scented tea, I turned the conversation from the Unity of God to the question of where to live. Muley Khamedo said that this was already arranged. Si Abd el-Kader had explained my wants in his letter. I was to honor Hadje Omar by occupying his other house during my stay in Mogador, and might Allah grant that it be a long one! And as for a servant, he, Muley Khamedo, would do his best to satisfy me in that capacity.

Now Si Abd el-Kader had told me that I could hire an English-speaking servant for ten *duros* a month. I did not feel that I could offer so small a sum to a Prince of the Holy Blood. So I explained that my needs were very simple, and that I wanted a younger boy who would be willing to work for very little.

"You are the friend of a friend," the Shareef

replied. "It could not be done to trust you to a stranger — a good-for-nothing from the market-place. Si Abd el-Kader say in his letter you pay ten *duros* a month. It is enough. I am your servant."

It was apparently "Written in the Book." There was no escape from it. The Prince of the Holy Blood, Muley Khamedo bin Jerid el-Krakeb, is my servant for $8.33 a month.

"Now," said Hadje Omar, "we will go and look at your garden."

We put on our shoes and went out again into the glare and dirt of the streets, and, after many more bewildering turns, came to another blue door in a white wall. Hadje Omar gave his name to the voice which replied to our knock. Bolts grated again, and the heavily studded gate was opened for us by a very small Moorish servant girl. She kissed the hand of Hadje Omar and of my servant, and led us into a pleasant garden. There was much dark green foliage, relieved by clumps of brilliant geraniums and azaleas. Over all was the heavy scent of the wild narcissus. The orderliness of the place was unusual; the paths were

swept, the bushes pruned. All this spoke of European care. The Moor prefers to let his garden go to seed, or, as he would say, to let it grow as Allah, the Great Gardener, wills. At all events, it was a beautiful place, and I was just formulating the conviction that it was indeed a kindly fate which had led me to Hadje Omar when a woman's voice asked, in purest French, who was there. The owner of the voice, clothed in a dainty Paris gown, appeared in the arched doorway beyond the garden.

Muley Khamedo, bowing very low — for it is not good to look on the unveiled face of a strange woman — told her that Hadje Omar had need of his garden to entertain a friend from America, and that she and hers were to vacate immediately. The look of dismay on her face was tragic. It developed that she was the wife of a French officer — an instructor of the police. They had rented the place from Hadje Omar some months ago, and, although there was no lease, they had expected to stay there permanently.

I explained to Muley Khamedo that, while I deeply appreciated the immensity of Hadje

Omar's hospitable intentions, I could not allow him to dispossess a whole family on my account. My host tried to brush aside my objections. Was not the garden his? Was it not better to have a friend in one's house than a stranger? But, in the face of the lady's evident distress, I could not but stand fast, and at length I succeeded in backing out with the two Moors.

"But," said the Shareef, "why not? He is a dog, a Frenchman."

Later in the day, while taking tea with an English family, I related the incident.

"But why not?" They all echoed Muley Khamedo's question. "It would have served them jolly well right. The French think they own the earth."

The Moors are not the only ones here who dislike the French. The story has spread, and almost every one I meet regrets that I did not allow Hadje Omar to put this family on the street.

"They would have had an awful time," one Englishwoman said. "Everybody hates the husband. No one would have rented them a house. They would have had to go to the hotel or into the *Mellah*. Of course you're a stranger

here, and didn't understand, but you missed a great chance."

Although I had not been here long enough to reach this degree of Francophobia, I soon began to feel the cost of my courtesy. Available houses are very scarce.

We went to Hadje Omar's shop, where he buys cereals and rawhides from his countrymen and exchanges them for the tea and sugar of the Infidel. As soon as we were installed on three comfortable cushions, word was sent out to the native news agency — a wireless system which antedates M. Marconi by many centuries — that Hadje Omar wished to rent a house for a friend. Hardly five minutes had passed when a white-haired old Jew, in kaftan, tarboosh, and slippers of black, came up jangling a bunch of keys big enough for a fortress. He led us to another blue door in another white wall. It was an immense house. There were four big rooms on each of the three stories. Upon the flat roof the sun was hot and blinding; downstairs it was dark and chilly as the grave.

"He ask ten *duros* for it," Muley Khamedo said. "He will take eight."

But it was too big, too damp and dismal. We went back to Hadje Omar's shop. Three men were waiting for us, each with a bunch of mighty keys. But, for one reason or another, my Moorish friends judged these houses unsuitable without having inspected them.

The next day was a repetition of the preceding one. We looked at three houses. The first two were impossibly dirty. The third was clean and airy, but preposterously big; there were at least a dozen living-rooms more than I needed.

"How much?" I asked.

There was a long parley in Moorish.

"He say twelve *duro*. He take ten."

It was rather depressing to think of living with so many empty rooms, but it was the one pleasant house I had seen and there was a magnificent view from the roof. It was arranged that the man would come to my hotel at four with a witness to close the contract. I went to my room and packed. But he did not come at four. Muley Khamedo went out to look for him. The owner had changed his mind; he would not rent. I told the Shareef to offer him

more money. But no. Some stubborn, unaccountable Oriental cog had slipped in his brain, and the house was no longer for rent.

In desperation I went to the shop of Hadje Omar and told him that I would rent the gloomy house of the Jew.

"But," he protested, through Muley Khamedo, "you said you did not like that house. If you do not like it, why take it?"

I explained to them that I was tired of house-hunting, tired of paying extravagant rates for very poor accommodations at the hotel.

"Hadje Omar say," the Shareef interpreted, "are you not his father and his mother? His house is your house. Why you not come to live with him? No good thing is done with hurry. In two, three days — *inch Allah* — we will find a pleasant house."

It is seldom indeed that an Infidel gets such an invitation. Partly for the unusual experience, more to escape from the hotel, I accepted. Hadje Omar proved an excellent host. We had many pleasant meals and several gallons of very sweet tea together, and we discussed everything from the French conquest of Morocco

and the Turco-Italian war to the efficacy of fasting as a means of reaching up to God.

But, although I can sit cross-legged, although I can eat with my fingers and sleep comfortably on the floor, I need a chair and table to write decently, so I kept the project of house-hunting as much in the front as I could without seeming discourteous to my very kind host. However, things might have gone on in this indecisive way for a long time had not Hadje Omar been summoned to attend a wedding of the Kaïd Anflus in the interior. It was, of course, impossible to leave two unmarried men in his house during his absence.

There seemed to be no alternative but to take the dark and chilly house of the Jew. We found that it had been rented the day before! And just at this crisis, as we stood disconsolately in the street, a man came rushing round the corner, shouting, "Hadje Omar! Hadje Omar!" and waving a bunch of keys.

He led us round some more corners to another blue door. I was evidently becoming a burden to my host, and before we reached it I resolved to rent this house, however it looked, whatever

the terms. It was a pleasant surprise, when we entered, to find it the best place I had seen — excepting, of course, the beautiful garden of Hadje Omar, where the French people lived. There were a court, a kitchen and two rooms on the ground floor, and upstairs three sunny rooms and a little arched arcade overlooking the court. It was the airiest, lightest Moorish house I had been shown. I tried to conceal my glee for fear of pushing up the price.

"He say six *duro*," the Shareef at last informed me. "He take five."

"Done," I cried, and, calling on every one there present to witness the transaction, I handed out the money. I did not want to give this landlord a chance to change his mind. And so at last I gained possession of some keys — altogether they must weigh fifteen pounds. And the house, which exactly fits my purpose, costs the ridiculous sum of $4.17 a month.

Hadje Omar did not feel that he could leave until he had seen me installed. So the buying of furnishings began at once. I had a camp outfit, including a bed and some cooking utensils. An English friend kindly lent me a writing-table

and some chairs. Hadje Omar donated a "*m'tarba*" — literally, "that which makes happy" — so the Moors describe a mattress. These things having been put in place, we went to Hadje Omar's shop. Once more word was sent out to the native news service — which reaches all corners of an Oriental town with much more despatch than our Western newspapers — that the friend of Hadje Omar wanted to buy blankets and rugs and mattings, or "*haseerah.*" This last word is one often heard in Arabic, for the Moors, instead of saying "*sub rosa*" to denote secrecy, say "*taht el haseerah*" — "under the matting."

We had hardly seated ourselves when responses to our advertisement began to come in. Hadje Omar's dingy shop blossomed out into the gorgeous colors of Rabat and Sousi rugs. About all one can say for the native carpets is that the colors are vegetable dyes. But in nine rugs out of ten the combinations of orange and purple and green are hideous to Western eyes. But the *battaneeyat* (blankets of belly wool), being white, or striped with one color, are always beautiful. The man who makes straw matting



MULEY KHAMEDO



— it seems to be a monopoly — came in to say that his stock was sold out, but he would take my order and keep his apprentices up all night to fill it.

These matters having been attended to, Hadje Omar gave out a new statement; it consisted of a string of Arabic words — the names of all sorts of things from dish-rags to cooking-stoves. These latter are an important item in Moorish housekeeping. They are made of pottery, and cost from six to ten cents apiece. But you have to have a separate stove for each dish which needs heating. That first day we bought three — for the teapot, the frying-pan, and *kous-kous-soo*. But, as I like coffee, I have had to buy two more for that — one for the coffee, another for the milk, and so forth. Altogether my bachelor establishment includes eleven stoves.

The carpet-sellers folded up their wares and departed. The shop filled up again with potters carrying on their heads, *m'tharid* bowls and water-jars, carpenters with tea-tables and clothes-chests, tinkers with lanterns and kettles, brass smiths with trays and basins.

Two or three times I saw articles which I knew I needed, and asked Muley Khamedo the price.

"Oh," he replied, "it is too soon to ask that."

The article would be passed from hand to hand for ten minutes before the momentous question was put. My efforts to hurry matters so evidently distressed my friends that I sat back and let them do things in their own way.

Buying and selling with the Moors is a sort of dramatic entertainment; it has its conventions and unities as formal as those of our own theatre. But it is rudimentary. It resembles that class of plays which our critics group under the derisive title of "Ding-Dong Drama." Some one on the stage says "Ding," and you know at once that the protagonist will reply "Dong."

When Hadje Omar would finally ask the price, he and all the audience knew that the tradesman would ask three times what he hoped to receive. But when he did follow tradition and ask the price which every one expected, Hadje Omar and Muley Khamedo would very cleverly pretend to be shocked and grieved.

But, although the variety of incident is very limited in this mercantile drama, it gives great play to imaginary invective and eulogy and to witty repartee. It is greatly appreciated by the audience. There is always an audience. You will sometimes see Moors actually running across the street to listen to a brilliant piece of bargaining. Hadje Omar's shop was crowded. Even the saintly anchorite who sits most of the day before the Grand Mosque declaiming the Unity of God and the holiness of Muley Abd el-Kader stopped his devotions to come over and listen.

Was it a crockery stew-pan at issue, the real price being four cents and the price demanded twelve, Hadje Omar would push it aside in contempt.

"Dog and son of a dog!" he would roar, "I would not give two cents for it if I were buying it for a slave of a cow."

"*Ya, Sidi,*" the potter would reply. "I am a poor man, dust under your wealthy feet. But it is a beautiful stew-pan, made from clean clay; my wife washed it carefully. I worked on it two whole days. Should I receive but one cent for a whole day's work?"

Hadje Omar laughed at this proposition. It was his firm conviction that a cross-eyed Jewess could make a better stew-pan out of dung in two hours.

"Well, ten cents," the potter would say when the laughter had finished. "Ten cents is a small price for so noble and rich a man as the American. Besides, he is not a true believer and will be damned."

"May a pig die on the grave of your grandmother!" Muley Khamedo would break in. "Will Hadje Omar let you rob his friend?"

"Well, noble masters, as he is the friend of Hadje Omar, perhaps Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful, will lead him in the right way. I will give him the stew-pan for eight cents."

Finally I would get the stew-pan for four cents. Furnishing a house by this method is a drawn-out affair. But the interest of the audience never flagged throughout the long, hot afternoon. Hadje Omar and Muley Khamedo enjoyed their part of the performance immensely.

Only once was the bargaining interrupted. An animated bundle, wrapped up in a soiled

white *haïk*, appeared at the door of the shop. An eye peeped out of a one-inch triangle near the top and two battered red slippers stuck out below — so I knew it was a woman.

"This lady come cook for you," the Shareef informed me. "She wife of dead man who worked for Mr. Hadje Omar. He say she moral lady. She cook with you for four *duro* a month. Cook, wash, clean dishes, house, everything. Will she do?"

Of course I knew that Mussulmans sometimes choose their wives without having seen them, but it had never occurred to me that they hired their cooks in the same trustful fashion.

If she was being presented to me as a possible wife, the fact that she was a "moral lady" would of course have great weight. But this consideration did not seem so pertinent in regard to a cook. So I questioned Muley Khamedo on her ability to make bread and *kous-kous-soo*.

"Oh, yes," he replied; "she cook good, good. She very old."

So, as he also would have to eat her cooking, I hired her on his recommendation.

One thing was very noticeable in the afternoon's shopping. Both the Moors preferred gaudy European articles to the handiwork of their own people. They insisted on my buying a tawdry English tea-tray instead of a beautifully chased copper one, which I could have had for the same money. When I wanted to buy a brass "*tass*," the equipment for hand-washing at meals, they were almost moved to tears, and would, I think, have been really offended if I had not given in to their urgings and taken a vulgar granite-ware wash-basin which would not be tolerated outside of the kitchen at home.

By the next day I was settled. The painter had still a bit to do, and one table was being finished by a native carpenter. But things were sufficiently in order to satisfy Hadje Omar, and he departed to the marriage feast up country.

The lightest room upstairs is my study and bedroom. The big table, the Belgian lamp and the books give it a European look in spite of the flaring colors of the Rabat rug. The other big room is fitted up in Moorish style — low divans covered with red and white striped blankets about

three sides and low tables for the meals and tea. The Shareef has his mattress in the smaller room. Downstairs Zinb — the Moral Lady — has her kitchen, a room to sleep in and a storeroom for charcoal and provisions.

The four *duros* a month which I pay her seems to include the hire of her family. The first day I found a lad of fourteen scrubbing the courtyard. "It is the lady's son," Muley Khamedo explained. The next day the door was opened to me by a young girl of eight or nine. "It is the daughter of the lady's sister," I was told. At one time or another I have found "the mother of the lady's brother's wife," the son of another sister, the niece of her friend, and so forth. I have a shrewd suspicion that our inordinately large consumption of sugar and candles could be explained by searching some of these relations on their departure.

The lady herself has no dealings with me. She kisses the hand of my holy servant in season and out, but does not even look at me. When I ask her to do something in my few and painful Arabic words, she first goes and asks the permission of the Shareef.

It is a very quiet, peaceful life. At four in the morning the *moodhen* from the neighboring minaret begins the "call to prayer." He has a penetrating tenor voice. "There is no God but God," he cries four times, to the four winds of heaven. The *moodhen* from the Grand Mosque takes up the call in a deep basso. Faintly a baritone from a more distant minaret joins in the round. The final cadence goes: "It is sweet to sleep, but it is better to pray." I disregard the advice, and, half ashamed of myself, fall asleep again to the monotonous chant of the Shareef across the court repeating the Ninety-nine Most Beautiful Names of God.

The next thing I know he is knocking on my door at sunrise with a pail of water. Cleanliness and godliness are so closely connected in his mind, and his dread of cold water is so great — he steams the dirt from himself in the Moorish *hammam* — that he regards my morning bath as a religious ceremony of great solemnity. "*Bismillah*," he says when he hands me the pail, and "*El hamdu l'illah*," when he carries out the tub.

I find the table set with grapes and bread and

wild honey and a pot of hot coffee. While I breakfast he cleans and airs my room. Then the day's shopping is arranged and I sit down to a morning's work, interrupted only by the occasional chant of a beggar at the door, asking alms for the glory of God and Sidi Hamed ou Mousa.

Lunch consists of eggs with vegetables and dates, and dinner rotates, sometimes a meat and vegetable stew, sometimes a fowl fried in argan oil with grapes and onions, sometimes *kous-kous-soo*. In these latter meals Muley Khamedo joins me, and we struggle with the Moorish dialect. The dinner lessons continue till bedtime.

The little community of Europeans here is divided into bitter cliques over politics. First of all, everybody else hates the French. But even the tiny English colony is split into factions which unite only on Christmas, the King's birthday and other solemn occasions, when England expects every man to do his duty. But, being an outsider, the only American in the town, I have so far managed to keep out of the squabbles. And when I tire of my princely servant, of my books and of riding in the foot-

hills, I can always find a civilized welcome, a cup of tea and newspapers.

The other morning I cast up accounts and learned several Arabic bookkeeping words. The installation has cost me about thirty *duros;* the rugs and brass work will be of permanent value. The fixed charges for the month are:

Rent	5 duros
Prince Khamedo	10 duros
Zinb and her relatives	4 duros
	19 duros

Three weeks' marketing accounts point to about as much again, making a total of forty *duros* a month, or about thirty-five dollars. I doubt if many bachelors are living as comfortably at home for so little.

MOGADOR, 1911.



XII. THE BEGGARS OF MOGADOR

IN general the beggars of the Orient are a repellent and offensive lot. But here in Mogador the sun shines so much of the time that it has lightened their dispositions. The speech of the townspeople has an easy-going lisp. They have softened out the more brutal gutturals of the language of the Prophet. Perhaps this explains why even the beggars smile at you. Even if you have forgotten to take along a pocketful of *flus* — copper coins six of which equal one of our cents — you can walk through the town without fear of being cursed. Few of the beggars are hungry enough to care very much whether you throw them *flus* or not.

The exceptions are the nomads from the Wad Noon. As their garments are always of "guinea cloth," the Europeans call them "the blue people." They are outlanders, desert folk, who have been driven into town by the famine which is raging to the south. Although they are a surly tribe — they wear a

strip of cloth across their mouth and nose, so that they may not breathe unfiltered the air which has been contaminated by Christians — they are picturesque, and perhaps the most interesting people here.

If about the time of Chaucer some English families had migrated to an inaccessible island, had taken with them no book but Wyclif's Bible, and through all the ages which have rolled by since had been untouched by any idea we call modern, had kept the Chaucerian language unrevised, the old customs and costumes unchanged, they would, if they occasionally visited London or New York, add a piquant touch of color to our drab modern life. They would offer immense interest to our students of history and language.

So are the Wad Nooni. They are of pure Arab stock, they speak the dialect of the tribe of Koreish, the language of the Koran. In the brave old days when El Mousa and El Tarik were overrunning North Africa and Spain, their ancestors strayed southward, down into the great desert, to the inaccessible oases of the River Noon. They know nothing of Al Ghazzali

or any of the great reformers of Islam. Theirs is the pure faith, as theirs is the unchanged language, of the Prophet. Their pride is stupendous. And the famine which drives them north into this city defiled by Jews and Christians must indeed be horrible.

The men never beg, at least not of a Christian. They draw back as you pass them in the street, to escape contact with your shadow, and with insulting ostentation they arrange the filter over their breathing apparatus. But one can forgive much to such fine-looking specimens of our race. They are straight as pine trees. Their stride — the free open swing of the desert — is superb. They can look at the sun without blinking.

However, the most monumental pride will not keep one alive. Hardly an hour passes when I do not hear the voice of some of their women at my door. Very few of the natives can understand their classically correct Arabic. But one does not have to be fluent in the language to distinguish at once their rasping gutturals. There are generally two or three women, together with their children. Even

they are too proud to beg frankly. They chant the *hadits* or commentaries. It is as though two or three Highland Scotch women read in unison a sermon from John Knox. Only the tune they use has a ludicrous resemblance to that of our childhood about "King William was King James' son."

There is only one native Mogador beggar who is an exception to the general rule of amiability. One knows that the "blue people" from Wad Noon are actually suffering from hunger, although they do not look it. On the other hand, the Jew Mousa is not nearly so miserable as he tries to appear. His stock in trade is the Evil Eye. He sits daily in the Lesser Square, just at the entrance of the Dark Archway, and croaks ominously at all who pass. His filthy, ragged gaberdine is carefully disarranged to exhibit his wrinkled chest and scrawny shoulder. He is as repulsive a sight as any beggar of Constantinople or Moscow. There is good reason to believe, I am told, that the devil himself, or at least some of the more spiteful of the *jinoon*, are in partnership with Mousa in his begging enterprise. The Dark

Archway, by which he sits, is a long tunnel under a pile of dwelling-houses. Even on a sunny day it is obscure and dismal — just the kind of a place to attract an evil spirit who enjoys pinching a person's ear. And this, I am told, is very likely to happen to you if you enter the Dark Archway without dropping a *flus* into Mousa's bowl. He is by far the most prosperous beggar in town.

At first I was rather indignant with him, and felt that if I were basha I would hang him up by his heels and flog him. But I find that the native authorities have arranged the matter in a better spirit. About four-fifths of Mousa's receipts find their way into the basha's treasury. Mousa is practically a government official. He collects the tax on Superstition. It is a revenue-raising measure which deserves the attention of Mr. Lloyd George in England and of our own tariff reformers. For superstition is certainly a useless luxury. If we could arrange a tax on every one who feared to sit thirteen at table or to walk under a ladder, if we could squeeze a few farthings out of every one who shuddered over a broken mirror or

spilled salt, we could double our educational budget.

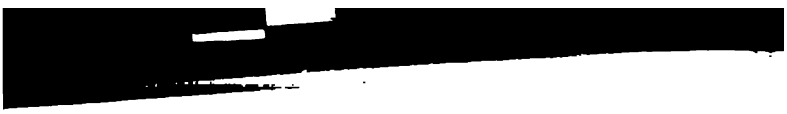
The blind Kaïd Omar is also an unpleasant sight. Where his eyes used to be there are two horrible seared scars. In the days when Muley el-Hassan, of blessed memory, was Sultan of Morocco, Omar was a powerful country governor. The sovereign invited him to court and treated his eyes with red-hot irons to make him see the wisdom of giving up his treasure. This was all very long ago, and hardly any one in Mogador remembers the time when the Kaïd could not be seen about the town. He is led by a laughing young rascal who every now and then deserts him to play or fight with some of his kind.

But the Kaïd Omar is not as sorry a person as he looks. He is a very wise old man. The literal translation of Islam, the religion he professes, is "resignation." Omar is a thirty-third degree Mussulman. He is also a man of some authority. On account of his former glory, his venerable age, and his wisdom, he is sheik of the beggars. In him are embodied the ideals of the guild and among them he



Photograph by N. Johnston, Mogador.

A BLUE WOMAN FROM THE WAD NOON







dispenses justice. Even the basha would not interfere with a beggar without first consulting Omar.

He lives in a clean and pleasant house. His day's work over, he sheds his rags and dons a *jillab* as white as his hair and beard. His wives followed him in his distress, and he has two stalwart sons. In spite of his blindness, he is not altogether to be pitied. He belongs to the religious order of the Tidjania. They believe that Allah's ability to create comes from love. Hence all created things — including Jews and Christians — are loved of God. Unlike most Moslim sages, he is quite willing to talk to an Unbeliever. It is like sitting at the feet of that brave old Stoic, Marcus Aurelius. "Nothing," says Omar, "is to be regretted which might happen indiscriminately to a good man or a bad." "If Allah should mould together all such misfortunes as broken bones, sickness, poverty, death, into one horse, and all such blessings as health, wealth, many sons, long life, into another," the blind Kaïd argues, "the wise man would not seek to distinguish between them. He would shut his eyes and jump on the first horse

he touched. For all such things are indifferent. There is no good but God, no evil but sin."

In all the sing-song chants of the beggars the name you hear most frequently is Muley Abd el-Kader — "the Slave of the Powerful." He is the patron of all those who are in need. He was a holy mystic of Bagdad, born in the 561st year after the flight of the Prophet, 1166 years after the Christ. He is the Saint Francis of Islam. A biographer sums up his life in these words:

"He was dominated by love for his neighbor and by an ardent charity which made him during his life the support of the poor and feeble, and after his death the patron ceaselessly invoked by all those who suffer."

Mohammedanism is often thought of as a religion of blood and iron. But not even did the Carpenter of Nazareth so frequently enjoin charity as the Camel-Driver of Mecca. Mohammed was an orphan, and during his childhood knew the bitterness of hunger. The Koran contains such words as "poor," "widows and orphans," "alms," more often than the New Testament. Pictures are forbidden to

Mussulmans, and "God bless our home" mottoes are very popular among them. The one most commonly encountered on the walls of Moorish houses contains the "Two Great Commandments": "Pray to God before you die," "Give alms before you die." Prayer and almsgiving are the two pillars which support the Church of Islam.

And just as a prayer rug is necessary for the performance of the first duty, so are beggars requisite for the second. A devout Mussulman would regard our Charity Organization Societies and our "Campaigns for the Suppression of Mendicancy" as the most abhorrently irreligious manifestation of our infidel civilization. It would seem to him like deliberately closing one of the all too narrow doors to paradise.

As long as Islam flourishes there will be beggars, for there will always be devout people who will give away all they have, and so become beggars themselves. A case recently came to my attention which is eloquently typical. The wife of a prosperous farmer died. He was childless and had always longed to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. The round trip can be

made from Mogador in comparative comfort for a little more than four hundred dollars. He sold his worldly goods for several thousand dollars, distributed this in alms, and set out on foot to beg his way across the whole width of Africa! The beggar is regarded more as a holy man than as a person in need. He is one of "God's poor." Alms are given, not to decrease poverty, but to increase piety. Without exception, the beggars ask you to give to God. And in this contrast lies most of the gulf which separates the East from the West.

A man shuffles up to me on Broadway with a hard-luck story and asks the price of a night's lodging. I look him over carefully, cross-question him insultingly, and find it hard to decide whether he needs the money or wants a drink, whether I ought to give him a quarter or call the police. Whichever way I decide, I inevitably reproach myself.

In and out through the crowded Sok of Mogador one of the begging friars of the order of the Derkawa twists his way. There is a rapt look on his upturned face, his eyes are half closed, but somehow he manages to dodge the

lumbering camels, the ill-tempered donkeys; somehow, without apparently taking heed of such things, he finds his way through the maze of China tea cases and boxes of London candles, the sacks of dates from Wad Draa and of almonds from the Sous. Around his neck is a rosary of ninety-nine great beads — one for each of the Most Beautiful Names of God — and in his right hand he holds an iron-shod staff. At regular intervals he stops abruptly and bays out the name of God. The devout people — and those with a particularly smarting sin on their conscience — stop their marketing and hurry after him to give him alms. You may be quite sure that no one raised the question as to whether this so evidently holy man needed the money or whether he would make good use of it.

In the various *zawias*, or chapter-houses, of the religious orders, *fatihahs*, or blessings, are being continually offered for those who give alms in the name of the Founder. Sidi bel Abbas is the patron of the blind. When you hear his name chanted outside your door, you know, if you open your purse to the blind

beggar, you will share in the blessings which will be recited at sundown in the great *zawia* of Sidi bel Abbas in Marrakesh.

How tangible such a blessing may be was shown me the other day in a striking manner. The house next to mine belongs to a Moorish official, the Master of the Port. The next house also belongs to him, but he has turned it into a cow-shed. As I went out one morning I found a blind beggar crouched by the door of this debased dwelling-house busily chanting the praises of his patron. He did not, as is generally the case, have a child to guide him about, and he had apparently felt his way along the walls to this door. As he was not likely to get any action out of the cows, and as it seemed a shame to have him waste so good a chant, I dropped a couple of coppers into his bowl.

"May the rich blessings of Sidi bel Abbas," he said, in the regular formula, "be upon those who dwell in this house!" He shuffled off down the street to the next door. A few hours later I encountered the owner of the cows, and, after some neighborly salutations, I told him of the blessing I had won for his live stock. That

evening he sent me a bowl of rich cream. It was the best, so he said, that his dairy had ever produced.

The orphans have a distinctive chant of their own. It begins: "O fortunate one, give alms in the name of our Lord Mohammed, who, like us, was an orphan, and for the blessing of your parents!" It goes on to the effect that if your parents are still alive, the *fatihahs* of the orphans will lengthen their lives, and that if they are dead, the blessing will reach them in paradise — they will feel upon their cheeks a breeze sweet with the smoke of *aod el-kmari*, which all true believers know to have been the favorite incense of the Prophet.

But when you hear singing outside your door, it is not always from this class of beggars. The business of "entertaining" is closely allied to mendicancy. There is no theatrical "profession." The amusement artists do not draw regular pay. As they are dependent on what people will give them, they have been shrewd enough to sanctify their calling to share in the bounty of alms.

When you pitch a copper on to the carpet

of the story-teller in the Sok, he stops his yarn to cry, "Praise be to God and to Sidi L'mdoog!" In giving, you have not only encouraged the art of oral literature, you have also gained the intercession of the patron of story-tellers. It is the same with even those Moorish acrobats you see in the circus at home. When they receive their Infidel pay envelopes, they open their hands as if holding the Holy Book and recite a *fatihah* for those who have given alms to the disciples of Sidi L'mdoog.

Here in Mogador, as in all the towns of North-west Africa, there are snake-charmers of the sect of the Aissawa. Sidi Mahmed bin Aïssa was born in Mequinez about 1527. He made the pilgrimage to Mecca and travelled widely through all the domains of Islam. He was a prestidigitator of parts, and could make magic squares with one hand tied behind his back, and knew all the mystic meanings of such numbers as 4-11-44. He returned to his birthplace in his old age and collected an immense following among the ignorant. The Sultan, believing the charge brought by the *Ulema* that he had dealings with *Shaïtan*, drove

him from Mequinez. In the flight his followers, having no provisions, were near starvation, but Sidi Mahmed outdid the miracle of the five loaves and two fishes by feeding his flock on scorpions and poisonous snakes. This, of course, demonstrated clearly that his powers came from God and not from the devil. He is revered by the more superstitious Moors as a great saint.

He founded a religious order which combines an extreme mysticism with cheap jugglery. In the "Oussia," or book of instruction, the Founder wrote:

"Love is the most complete degree of perfection. He who does not love can make no progress towards perfection. There are four degrees of Love which must be successively attained. (1) Love by Intellect; (2) Love by the Heart; (3) Love by the Soul; and (4) the Mysterious and Secret Love." Those of the Aïssawa who have reached an understanding of the third degree of love can charm snakes.

Their performances are just as well avoided by any one who does not enjoy reptiles. As a supreme demonstration of their control over

the venomous creatures they are likely to suggest that you hold them. The Christian who joins the circle about one of these fakers is apt to find himself in the embarrassing dilemma of being laughed at as a coward or having a snake wound around his neck. Personally, the conviction that the poor creature has been drugged by *keef* smoke into an entirely safe state of insensibility does not make the ordeal much pleasanter. I can claim a very small share in the *fatihahs* of the Aïssawa.

The extremes of the begging "amusers" are the clowns and the poets. There is a young Negro in Mogador who is the strangest *farceur* I have ever encountered. He is by no means averse to accepting alms from an Unbeliever, and, as he made me laugh the first time chance led him to my door, he put down my address in his note-book. He seems to think he has a vested interest in me.

Only a few days after I moved into this house I was disturbed by a frightful din outside my door. If you can magnify to a hundred dimensions the noise which results from spanking a lusty-lunged American boy of five, you get the

general effect. I thought that my neighbor the Harbor Master was beating one of his wives. Muley Khamedo rushed upstairs, crying, "Come, come! look, look!" This coal-black Ethiop stood before my door, with only a bit of sacking about his loins. He was smacking the inside of his arms against his bare ribs with a noise like a Gatling gun, and, with a dexterity I have never seen excelled by an Indian-club swinger, was slapping his open palm against all parts of his body from the soles of his feet to his shaven pate. A circle of open-eyed children and grinning adults had gathered about him. He recited his piece — a sort of dialogue — at the top of his voice. At one moment in a high falsetto squeak he would beg for mercy and promise to reform. The next in a thundering basso he would accuse himself of all the sins of which a woman is capable. What he said would not sound exactly funny written out in Western words. The worst of us at least pretend to think that wife-beating is not funny. But if I had been married to Mrs. Grundy and she had stood there by my elbow, I could not have helped laughing.

The performance came to an abrupt end. The clown, streaming with perspiration from his violent exertions, stretched out his arms and, looking up to heaven, began a solemn chant in praise of Muley Ibrahim, the patron of buffoons. The transition was so startling that my fingers lost control of themselves and gave him a silver coin, instead of the copper which would have been more than he deserved from any moral point of view. He crossed his hands on his chest and recited a *fatihah*. It was as if the Girl from Maxim's should end her wildest dance with the Benediction.

It is almost an outrage to speak of the strolling troubadours in the same breath with these buffoons — for many of them are true artists. Those I have had the good fortune to know have been courtly gentlemen. But even the most famous of them must hold out their hands, like this Negro clown, and beg. Their patron is Sidi Hammo ou Mousa.

In a class by themselves, and the noisiest beggars of all, are the divinity students. Scattered about in the various mosques and *zawias* of the city are a half-hundred youths who are



Photograph by N. Johnston, Mogador.

MOUSA, OF THE EVIL EYE

preparing themselves to be *Ulema*. They have a special charter of rights, not unlike those enjoyed by the university students of mediæval Europe. On stated occasions — notably during the Feast of Aäshaura — they go about town in a body in quest of alms. With much beating of tom-toms they stop in front of the houses of the various native celebrities — my neighbor the Harbor Master is always a victim — and recite the entire Koran. It is not so long a process as one would expect, for they divide it up into as many sections as there are students, and all do their shares simultaneously. There are only two-thirds as many verses in the Koran as in the New Testament. Fifty students can get through it in a very short time; but they make an immense amount of noise.

But if old Mousa is the most unpleasant, Kaïd Omar the wisest, the disciple of Muley Ibrahim the funniest, and these students the noisiest, the most insistent and ubiquitous beggars of Mogador are the *teebbeebts*.

A *teebbeebt* looks like a cross between an English sparrow and a thrush, the size of the former, the color of the latter. And it makes a noise

like its name. Apparently they have been influenced by the moral customs of the country in which they live — there seem to be two Mrs. Teebbeebts in each family. When the first trio flew into my *patio*, Muley Khamedo congratulated me. They are, he says, bringers of good fortune. And almost every time a Moor visits me he points out the *teebbeebts* and I am congratulated again. Although I am not much of an ornithologist, I was rather pleased at first. They are wonderfully tame birds, and it amused me to see how near I could coax them with bread-crumbs.

But they have presumed on my good nature in a disgusting manner. They notified all their relatives that I was "easy." I now have six families on my hands, eighteen in all. They consume nearly a loaf of bread a day. I do not grudge them the sustenance, but they give me no peace. They are always quarrelling over their intricate matrimonial affairs. And eighteen *teebbeebts* arguing at the top of their voices are distressing. Worst of all, they are such infernally early risers. At the first faint glimmer of the false dawn they begin to sputter

for food. For five minutes they discuss it in a committee of the whole, and then an indignant delegation fly into my bedroom window. I cannot sleep with half a dozen *teebbeebts* scolding at me. They bother me more than all the rest of the beggars in Mogador. And, besides, they are very careless in their personal habits. It is necessary to look carefully at my chair before I sit down in it. Some days ago I formed a project of a *teebbeebt* pie. But when I confided in Muley Khamedo, he was horrified.

"Oh, no, Sidi!" he said. "It must not be done. It would be a *hharam* — a sin. They are God's own beggars."

MOGADOR, 1911.

XIII. THE RELIGION OF MULEY KHAMEDO

SOME days ago the Hamadsha of the neighboring town of Saffi made their annual pilgrimage to the chapter-house of their order in Mogador. On account of their reputation for fanaticism Europeans were warned to stay within the city walls after noon. But, dressed in Moorish clothes, my camera hidden under my *jillab*, Muley Khamedo smuggled me through the gate and out to the house of a friend a quarter of a mile down the Saffi road. After a native lunch we established ourselves on the flat roof of the house.

There was a brilliant sun, which cast ink-black shadows on the sand, but a raw, biting wind howled in from the Atlantic. It soon covered our *jillabs* with fine drops of moisture, for the surf was running high on the rocks only a hundred yards beyond the road.

Something unusual was evidently afoot. The Jewish cemetery, between the road and

the sea, instead of its usual groups of mourners, was close crowded with Moorish women — motionless, formless bundles, wrapped in white and cream-colored *haïks*. Little Moorish boys, with shaven heads, clad in bright red and yellow tunics, were making a holiday of the occasion. They were shouting and playing tag in the road below me, and "following the leader" in a sort of obstacle race over the tombs. Grave potentates from the city in rich clothing rode by on pacing mules. Nubians, barelegged, carrying dripping goatskins on their backs and tinkling their brass bells, dodged in and out of the crowd, crying, "Fresh water! Fresh water!"

In the constantly changing, colorful scene I remember especially a woman from the Wad Noon, far to the south. Her dark, comely face was unveiled, and, instead of the cumbersome *haïk* of the city, she wore a single garment of dark blue. The stiff breeze pasted it to her like a second skin. She walked by barefooted, with the fine, full stride of the desert, slim and beautiful. She seemed a different sort of animal from the soft, flabby women of the harems.

Far along the beach the crowd was denser

about the banners of the Hamadsha. They advanced very slowly, stopping every few hundred yards for their mystic dance. Faintly, when the stinging wind and the roar of the surf died down, I could hear their shrill reed instruments, the beating of tom-toms, and a snatch of their weird and wonderful chant. And now and again I caught the guttural "l's" of the Name of God.

I knew something of this religious sect. Their *zawia*, or lodge, is but a few houses from mine. Their singing is — except for the glorious funeral chant — the most beautiful music I have heard in Morocco. They are followers of a saint named Hamdushi, who in one of the innumerable campaigns of Andalusia led a forlorn hope of a few hundred Moors to victory against the flower of Spanish chivalry. The story goes that to inspire his men he told them that Allah had rendered them insensible to pain. To prove his words he drove his battle-axe deep into his own skull, and, with it sticking there, the blood streaming down his face, shouting the Name of God, he led his warriors in an irresistible charge. His followers still

claim the same immunity from pain. I had been told fantastic and revolting tales of the blood orgies and self-mutilation which are part of the mystic services in their *zawia*.

Very slowly they came down the beach. There must have been several thousand men grouped about the seven standards. Gradually the mass became differentiated. I could distinguish the crowd of onlookers from the worshipping sectarians. As yet the details were obscure, but I could see the rhythmic movement of the circle of dancers, once in a while an upflung arm above their heads. I could hear more clearly the staccato music and the bursts of their chant. It was all dominated by the shouted Name of God. By no trick of type can this sound be put on paper. There is a crescendo roll of throaty "l's" without a vowel, and then a short, sharp "LA": "LLLL–LA!" "LLLL–LA!" "LLLL–LA!" It was the undertone of all the music; like the contrabasso of an orchestra, this cry was the foundation of the *tempo*.

While the crowd was still some distance off, a group of men entered the courtyard next to

the roof where I was installed, for a drink of water. Muley Khamedo told me that they were Hamadsha. As they stood there below me, jesting with the proprietor of the well, it was hard to connect them with the wave of fanaticism advancing along the beach. They seemed quite ordinary men, entirely free from the intoxication of the dance, from the spell of the rhythmic cry of "LLLL–LA!" "LLLL–LA!" which was beginning to mount somewhat to my head. But presently, having satisfied their physical thirst, they hastened out to join their brothers who were drinking of a more mystic vintage.

The dance ceased abruptly, the banners waved unsteadily, and the crowd surged forward. A hundred yards from us a group suddenly detached itself. A giant Sudanese Negro led them. His white tunic was soaked with blood. He carried a cruel-looking battle-axe, supposed to resemble the legendary one of Saint Hamdushi; its double blades were crescent-shaped. He walked uncertainly, as though half fainting. Suddenly he turned to those who followed him, and with a shout of

"LLLL–LA!" brought the axe down on his shaved head. The blood spurted. The crowd closed about him.

"Now," said Muley Khamedo. "Now take picture. Not good when very close."

It took considerable will-power to pull myself together, to think of focus and aperture and length of exposure, with that cry of "LLLL–LA! LLLL–LA!" dinning in my ears, the vision of those God-intoxicated men and their bloody heads swimming before my eyes. But I tried to tear myself away from the thing as a whole, tried to fix my attention on this detail or that. When the front rank of the crowd came under us Muley Khamedo threw the corner of his *jillab* over the camera. He is not an unduly timid man, and I was willing to accept his verdict that it was unwise to run further risk of discovery. In all that wild mob I could not see a single Jewish or Christian costume. And that wonderful chant of the Hamadsha contains more than once the word "*Jehad*," or "Holy War." They live in the hope that the great days may return when they can use their axes on the Infidel.

In front of us they stopped again to dance. Two venerable old men, the sheiks of the Saffi and Mogador *zawais*, marshalled the devotees in a broad circle. They were all bareheaded, and almost every head bore the scars of former frenzies. About twenty men detached from the circle were drenched with blood; they seemed already spent.

Their friends held them up. I remember especially a white-skinned lad of seventeen or so. Fresh blood was streaming from his lacerated head, which rolled insanely. His lips were frothy with blood and spittle. I would have thought that he had fainted, so limply he hung in the arms of his comrades, if he had not at regular intervals stiffened up and bayed out the Name of God: "LLLL-LA! LLLL-LA!" Near by two others supported a man who might have been his grandfather. He, I think, was quite unconscious. The blood was caked and dried on his white hair and beard.

The circle of two hundred odd men danced solemnly under the guidance of the two sheiks. They fell on their knees in unison, and then together stretched up on their tip-

toes, their arms flung above their heads, and intoned: "LLLL–LA! LLLL–LA!" The tom-toms throbbed, the reeds shrieked — even the roar of the surf on the rocks beyond seemed to fall in with irresistible rhythm. Within the circle seven men began the Dance of Blood.

There were three who had Hamdushi axes. They would lay the weapons on the ground and prostrate themselves four times — to the four winds of heaven, — then, jumping up with a triumphal shout of "LLLL-LA!" they would rush wildly about the circle, chopping themselves. At first they did so rather gingerly, as though experimenting, testing, to see if the divine *baraka* had indeed rendered them insensible to pain. But as the blood ran down their faces the fury increased and they hacked themselves more and more mercilessly. There was no pretence about it towards the end. The blows they struck themselves were hard, the gashes and blood sickeningly real.

But the men with the axes were not so desperate as the other four. Three of them had immense knotted clubs. They could smash themselves much harder blows with these, and,

I suppose, stun themselves the sooner into the bliss of insensibility. But the skin of their heads, instead of having clean cuts, was literally mashed. The other man had a three-inch cannon ball, which, after various genuflections, he now and again threw into the air and let fall on his bare head. Although the surface of the ball was smooth, it had knocked loose a piece of his scalp, which flapped about with every movement. He was the most blood-soaked, and was evidently regarded as the most holy of the lot.

The old sheiks rushed about within the circle, inspiring one, restraining another. Once there was an untoward commotion. The Saffi sheik began to struggle with one of the axemen. Several from the circle rushed to help him.

"He want to kill himself," Muley Khamedo explained.

Three old women came into the circle with a little brazier of charcoal on which they threw some incense. The sheik and his assistants led the struggling madman to the women and made him inhale the fragrant smoke. I suppose it contained hashish or some powerful

drug, for presently he ceased his contortions and fell in a limp faint. The women fanned the incense about his face for a few moments and then left him there. His blood made a little pool in the sand, and he lay there very peacefully while the mad dance went on.

It was quite evident that the sheiks held their adepts in restraint. Many of the men in the circle were anxious to join in the mystic frenzy of the chosen seven. But the sheiks calmed them, seeming to tell them, "Not yet." And when the interval between the cries of "LLLL–LA! LLLL–LA!" became too short for breathing, when the men of the circle were drenched with perspiration, when the madness within the circle had reached its utmost limit, some order from the sheiks stopped it abruptly.

The circle broke up. The banners, which had been planted in the sand, were taken up. The unconscious axeman was lifted to his feet. The crowd fell in behind the tom-toms and the reeds; and, intoning once more their weirdly beautiful chant, they marched off to their *zawia* in the city, where the orgy would recommence.

One cannot watch such a spectacle without

being moved, without to a certain extent becoming part of it. What was the IT which made me feel uncomfortable, impertinent — almost blasphemous — when I photographed it? The nearest I ever came to a like feeling before was in Moscow on the eve of Easter Sunday. Towards midnight the great court of the Kremlin filled with a dense crowd of pilgrims from all over Russia. I remember the biting cold of the night, the silent pressure of the crowd, unseen in the darkness. And then the sudden coming to life when the great bell announced the new day, the lighting of myriads of tiny candles, the frenzy of joy, the shouts, "The Christ has risen!" the mystic light on that sea of faces, illumined by the fitful wind-swept candles. I leaned against a pillar — alone, abashed — lost in that worshipping crowd. They were closer to the "burning bush" than I had ever been. I wanted to take off my shoes — uncover my head.

It was quite useless to recall that it was an ignorant, superstitious mob; that their religion, of all those which call themselves Christian, was the most sodden with corruption, the most

debased with theatrical trickery. It was useless to recall that such religious hysteria, instead of raising their moral level, was often the excuse for unspeakable cruelty to the Jews. The same feeling was infinitely stronger as I watched the Blood Dance of the Hamadsha. There could be no doubt that these men were worshipping — intensely.

In all ages, in all religions, certain types of mind have believed that special intimacy with the Deity could be won by such self-torture. By extreme fasting and cruel penitence they have won to a sort of cataleptic bliss which has seemed to them the consummation of holiness. Not many centuries ago bands of frenzied Christians wandered about Europe scourging themselves in much the same manner as these Hamadsha. But the Roman Church decided that such vigorous pursuit of God was heretical, and the Inquisition was able to suppress the public manifestations of the Flagellants. But here in present-day Morocco there is a larger tolerance. Although the authorities of the Moorish Church look with displeasure on such excesses of devotion, any group of men, so long

as they assert the Unity of God and the mission of Mohammed, are free to seek holiness as they will.

As we were walking homeward, Muley Khamedo spoke of these Hamadsha much as a conservative High Church curate would speak of the Salvation Army.

"They are fools," he said. "Ignorant people, porters, and mule-drivers. It is not the True Religion."

"The Prophet," I said, severely, "was himself a camel-driver and illiterate. You should not despise them because they are humble."

But he refused to be rebuked. He has too philosophical a conception of Deity to believe that he can be pleased by such spectacles.

"There is nothing about such foolishness in the Koran," he insisted.

But it was not so much the goriness of the Hamadsha's devotions which shocked him, as the audience.

"It is like a music hall," he went on, changing into French, which comes more easily to him than English. "Why don't they have a theatre, and sell tickets? *Voilà, une bonne affaire.* They would make money. But when

one worships, it is for God, not for men to see. *C'est dégoûtant.* Nothing is the True Religion which is not in the Holy Koran."

In the bottom of his heart I think Muley Khamedo hopes to convert me, and he is very anxious that his faith should not appear crude or laughable to me.

His attitude towards the Hamadsha illustrates how widely different are the forms through which the religion of Mohammed manifests itself. Many years ago a very superficial observer gave to the world an epigram to the effect that there were no denominational sects in Islam. George Sale, in the Preliminary Discourse to his translation of the Koran, enumerates more than twenty-five sects, and he deals with only the first few centuries of the Mohammedan era. But, in spite of the testimony of every student, it is currently believed by Christians that Islam is a formal, iron-bound code of beliefs, unchangeable for all the varied races over which it has spread, identical for all the men, so temperamentally different, of each race. Such a judgment is, of course, absurd. It is humanly impossible.

The varied manifestations of modern Islam can no more be understood from a reading of the Koran than the text of the New Testament will explain such manifestations of Christianity as a General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church and the Bowery Mission, the careers of Mrs. Eddy and Tolstoy, the Jesuit system of education and Mormonism. But just as through all this hodgepodge of mutually hostile Christian institutions one can trace certain common inspirations derived from the Nazarene Carpenter, so throughout the broad spiritual empire of Islam can be traced certain influences of the Camel-Driver of Mecca.

Above all, there is his magnificent monotheism. The CXII Sura of the Koran is daily on the lips of all the faithful:

"In the Name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful, say:

He is ONE GOD.
God, the Eternal.
He begetteth not, nor is begotten.
Nor is there one like unto Him."

And just as the Prophet, under this inspiration, could destroy the myriad idols of Arabia

thirteen centuries ago, so to-day his missionaries are iconoclasts, persuading the Negroes of Central Africa to break their mud fetiches and the more cultured inhabitants of eastern Asia to burn the tablets of their ancestors.

Further than this, Mohammed impressed on his disciples the efficacy of certain ritualistic prayers and fasts. And, as far as I can discover, his prohibition of swine's flesh and of usury are generally obeyed by all his far-flung followers. But it would be hard to find many other teachings of his which are observed by all Mussulmans. The drinking of wine is specifically forbidden. But even in Omar's day the Persians regarded it as, at worst, a venial sin. It is common in modern Turkey. The Moors, on the other hand, regard a man who tastes anything alcoholic as very little better than an Infidel.

Probably the one saying of Mohammed which is most widely known in Christendom is that in which he tolerated a limited polygamy. But certainly ten Mussulmans are monogamous to one who has a plurality of wives. The Berbers of South Morocco consider it shameful

except in cases of sterility. Their women have a freedom and are held in a respect which I have never seen surpassed, and rarely equalled, in Christian lands.

Mohammed, like Moses, tried to establish a theocracy, and gave a great part of his attention to building up a code of civil laws. Nevertheless, modern Islam is split up into four distinct systems of jurisprudence. While Morocco and Turkey both claim to be entirely orthodox, the laws of the one differ as widely from those of the other as do the laws of France from those of Germany.

The modern Mohammedan gets from his prophet a great metaphysical principle — the Unity of God — expressed in more simple terms than in any other religion. And, further, he receives a mass of ritual and an ethical code closely resembling that of the Jews, and varying very little in essentials from our own, or any of the great religions.

As in other religions, so here, the gift of the Prophet was a bare framework, which might become a dry skeleton of either scholastic philosophy or Pharisaical morality — a tithing of mint

and anise seed. The body of the religion had to be added by those who came afterwards. Whether or not one believes that the original scriptures were of divine dictation, the chief priests, the popes, the caliphs, were men. Their teachings have been subject to the natural law of adaptation to environment.

Ministers of the Gospel have found warrant for chattel slavery in the words of Jesus. And so many a human wrong has been defended by the divine books of the Jews and Moslims. But, on the whole, I think it is safe to assume that the men who have held the high posts in the various ecclesiastical hierarchies have been good men, sincerely believing in their creed, feeling the responsibilities of their priesthood, and trying to make of their Church a living force for betterment among their followers.

After all, the problems which have faced the prelates of various religions have been much the same. Their own authority rested on what they believed to be a divine revelation. But in every case it was so meagre and obscure as to need amplification and interpretation. Religion may be of God, but man has had to supply

the theology. And the flock of each shepherd was the same rather happy-go-lucky, indifferent human kind. All priests have had to fight the same preference for "cash" over "credit." In their efforts to supplant harmful habits by good, sometimes they tried arguments; sometimes they tried to cajole their flock by faery tales; sometimes they used threats of hell and promises of heaven — beat as loudly as might be on "the distant drum"; and sometimes they made something which looked like congealed blood turn into something which looked like fresh blood, or another trick of cheap magic. More often than not all four methods were combined. And all these endeavors — wise and unwise — have generally been for the great purpose of making the individual sons of Adam somewhat better men.

A marked difference in the histories of two religions would be more surprising than many similarities. The greatest difference I have found between the faith of my servant and that of my people is not so much a matter of creed as of historic development. Islam sprang into being almost full grown. Its childhood was



THE JEWISH CEMETERY, MOGADOR

very short. Within the life of its founder it had become the triumphing religion of a powerful nation. The first few centuries — during which Christianity was learning the lessons of adversity — Islam was celebrating a most amazing list of victories. Muley Khamedo has not learned any of the sweet graces of humility from his religion. We are apt to think that when Ferdinand drove the Moors from Spain, the expansion of Mohammedanism was definitely stopped. It was stopped on only one frontier. For five centuries more the Mussulmans were regularly defeating Christians in southeastern Europe. In the first decade of the nineteenth century they won victories on the Austrian Danube. And it is only within the last fifty years that their loss of territory in Europe and North Africa has begun to equal their expansion in other frontiers. It is doubtful if any religion to-day is growing as rapidly as Islam. The temporal power is crumbling. But just as the Roman Church thrives on disestablishment, so Mohammedanism is growing in French and German and English Africa, in India and China.

There is nothing in Muley Khamedo's religion

comparable to the Christian teaching that the Lord chasteneth those whom he loves, and there is nothing about turning the other cheek. When the hand of the Lord falls upon him heavily, he accepts the blow with resignation, but considers that it comes in wrath, not in love. His humility before Allah is more deep-seated than with most Christians. But before men he is as proud as Lucifer. I doubt if he could ever understand Tolstoy's doctrine of non-resistance.

But beyond these differences, growing, I think, entirely from the historic setting of victory, I find only similarities. There are very few currents of thought in Christianity which have not their counterparts in Islam. Long before Bañes, the fifteenth-century Dominican, and Molina, the Jesuit, began hurling pamphlets at each other on the question of Predestination and Free Will, Wâsel bin Ata in Bagdad was attacking the orthodox belief in Predestination and bringing up so many arguments for the opposite extreme that the Moslim world is still debating the question. And besides the extremists, who insisted in sitting on the very tips

of the horns of the dilemma, there was Abd er-Razzak, who, like the Christian Bossuet, tried to slip through this Scylla and Charybdis of theology on a flood of words.

But an even greater division within the Mohammedan Church — and here again we have an analogy to Christianity — arose over the discussion between the metaphysicians and the mystics. Even in the early centuries of the Mohammedan Church holy men arose who cried out against the barrenness of the Pharisees and philosophers, and, like Tolstoy, preached of a Kingdom of God within us. At first these mystics were treated as heterodox, or at least of doubtful respectability. But at last Al Ghazzali, considered by his contemporaries the crown of Arabic philosophy, joined the mystics. Very few divines of any religion have had as lofty a conception of Deity as that expressed by this Arab in his "Confessions" and "The Alchemy of Happiness" (both available in English). The scholasticism and dead morality against which Al Ghazzali inveighed are still to be found in Islam. But his great authority has given to his coreligionists a strong

trend towards mysticism, towards "personal religion," individual seeking after God. No one would be arrested as a vagrant in Mohammedan countries if he left all to follow salvation.

One could trace similarities almost endlessly. Just as the same Bible was read by Bunyan and Torquemada, the Koran affects different men in different ways. There have been in Islam rulers like the two Henrys, the Fourth of France and the Eighth of England, who with scant piety used their religion as a tool of ambition. There have been Mussulmans like Saint Francis and like Calvin. They have had philosophers who saw life as Schopenhauer did. There is much in Al Ghazzali which bears a striking resemblance to Henri Bergson — the Ultra-Modern. I have never read of the authorities of Islam selling indulgences. But certainly some of them grow fat on tithes. Now and then the funds of the Church are embezzled. There have been Moors who oppressed the poor and founded universities. And there have been many men who sought earnestly after righteousness.

Certainly neither Jesus nor Mohammed gave any warrant for the adoration of saints. But

the custom has grown in one religion as in the other.

A few miles out of Mogador is a very ancient argan tree. In some of the holes which have rotted in its immense trunk you can find a little manure and some heads of barley, tied together to represent one giant head. The people of the near-by Berber village put it there in the spring-time in the hope that their fields may bear barley with heads as large. Centuries ago their ancestors were pagans and probably worshipped the tree itself. The Romans came, and taught them Christianity. But the old habit persisted, and they still brought their offerings to the tree as their fathers had done. Christianity has been supplanted by Islam. The villagers now have a story that a Mohammedan saint once sat in the shade of the tree, and, under cover of this rather thin story, the crude old pagan polytheism has hung on.

Muley Khamedo explains such superstitions to me in the same supercilious tone that a Protestant would use in describing the pilgrimage to Lourdes or the fairy lore of Ireland.

But although one may doubt the miracles

which are attributed to the Christian saints, to Augustine and Dominic and the founders of the various orders, the holiness of their lives demands respect. The same holds true of the saints of Islam. Nearly always some "*légendes dorées*" have grown up about their names. As Saint Francis received the visible "stigmata," so, in one way or another, the tangible favor of God — the *baraka* — was shown to the founders of Mohammedan orders. That of Sidi Mohammed Abd el-Kader ed-Djilani is the oldest of these religious fraternities. Its saint lived in the twelfth Christian century. Si Mohammed bin Si Ali bin Snoussi founded his order in 1844, and the Amamïa, a sort of Knight Templar crusading order, was born even more recently.

But, despite the fantastic stories which are gravely told about the founders, the purity of their lives and their great piety are generally established facts of history. Going out into the desert places — as Christian and Buddhist saints had done before them — they worked themselves by fasting and prayer into a mystic religious ecstasy. It is a state of mind which must be discussed with reverence, even if with a

large scepticism by those who have never experienced it. The late Professor James studied its psychology in his book on "Religious Experiences." Harold Begbie has more recently described its manifestations among the poor of London in his "Twice-Born Men." Swedenborg tried to reduce it to a coherent religion. Many of the early Christian saints considered it the very essence of their faith. It is a fact of human psychology which cannot be denied and which is very hard to explain. A Christian nun has described it as "the touch of the Bridegroom's lips." A French scientist defines it as "hallucinations resulting from under-nourishment and autohypnosis."

But, call it what you will, this state of religious bliss, this "being intoxicated with God," is held by most Mussulmans to be the *summum bonum*. The holy anchorites, who, by intense fasting and prayer, attained to this high plane, this mystic union with God, soon found themselves besieged by disciples. Multitudes gathered before the mouths of their caves begging for the loaves and fishes of the spirit, asking to be guided in "the Path."

Those saints who were able to teach "the Path" — who were able, if you will, to pass on their trick of psychological legerdemain — are remembered as founders. The ritual, or régime, by which their followers are able to reach "the ecstasy," the "rule of the order," is called in Arabic the *dikhr*. All these religious fraternities are orthodox — that is, they observe the fasts and the prayers of the Church Universal. But in their *zawia*, or chapter-house, they perform the additional devotion of their *dikhr*.

The ritual of the Salemia opens with this prayer to Allah:

"Glory to Thee, Thou Only God.
Glory to Thee, Thy promise is true.
Glory to Thee, Thou art our Courage.
Glory to Thee, Thou assurest the victory.
Glory to Thee, Thou wilt deliver to us the Infidel.
Thou art the Only God."

The Tidjania, whose founder held Jesus and the Christians in very high regard and preached a gospel of love very similar to that of Tolstoy, follow a *dikhr* which in its constant monotonous repetition points strongly towards hypnosis. They carry a rosary of one hundred beads, and

for each bead they pray, "May God pardon me!" Thirty times they cry, "May the Mighty God, the Only God, the Living, the Eternal, pardon me!" Then seventy times they repeat:

"O God, may prayer be raised to our Lord Mohammed,
Who has opened all that which was closed,
Who has put the seal on all that which preceded.
Who made the Right triumph by means of Right,
Who has led us in the straight and lofty Way.
His Power and Force are founded on Right."

And again for each bead they proclaim the Unity of God:

"There is no God but the One God."

The warrior saint Bou Amama, who in 1881 led the great insurrection against the French in southwest Algeria, has given his followers an extremely mystical *dikhr*. Its imagery bears striking resemblance to the verse of the mediæval Persian mystics. They strive to express their passion for holiness in terms of human love. They pray:

"Oh, Our Lord, make my heart to throb with the ecstasy of Thy love.
Accord to me, in Thy Mercy — O Most Merciful — — the felicity of union with Thee.

Consume me with passion, melt me as soft wax in the Sun of Thy love."

These religious orders vary in size; some count their followers from Central Asia to the heart of Africa, some are very small. They differ in organization. In some cases the special blessing which was granted the founder — the *baraka* — descends by primogeniture. In some the relatives of the dead leader choose as successor the most godly of his sons. In others any member, no matter how humble his birth, may, by great piety, become the Captain-General.

But above all, they differ in precept and doctrine. The Salemia pray that the Infidels may be delivered into their hands. Many of them are dreaming of the *Jehad*. The Senoussia, very powerful in Tunisia, Tripoli, and the Egyptian border, are known to be actively preparing for it. The doctrines and practices of the Tidjania, who as I have already noted are friendly to Christians, are on a high and dignified plane; they would appeal to any person of a devout and mystical turn of mind. I have tried to describe the revolting orgy of the debased and fanatical Hamadsha.

It is in one of these varied orders that the average modern Mussulman finds the reality of his religion. The mosque is the meeting-place of all the faithful. There is chanted the common belief in the Unity of God, there the sacred Koran is publicly read. But in the *zawia* is a more intimate gathering of brothers. Some give themselves wholly to the work of the order, but by far the greater number are lay brethren who follow some ordinary trade. At twilight and on Fridays they drop into the chapter-house; and, sitting together, under the leadership of a beloved and respected sheik, they join in these mystic, hypnotic prayers, and enjoy some dreamy foretaste of the ineffable bliss to come — some fore-vision of the delectable gardens of paradise.

But my servant, Muley Khamedo, looks down on the orders. Although they all come under his condemnation, there are degrees in his disdain. There is a good deal of the warrior in his soul, and the more militant orders have an appeal for him. He would be glad to enlist under any flag which offered a chance of strong resistance to the recent encroachments of Chris-

tian nations. In quite another way, he respects the pure doctrine of Sidi Abd el-Kader ed-Djilani, and also the holiness of Sidi Hammo ou Mousa, the Berber saint. But he himself is a Shareef. In his veins flows the blood of the Prophet. He has no need of recourse to lesser saints.

The Shareefs form a sort of spiritual aristocracy. The Holy Family has furnished a surprisingly large percentage of the saints. Muley Khamedo says that his is the true religion of Islam. He is probably right in a historical sense. He knows most of the Koran by heart. He is familiar with the *hadits*, or traditions about the Prophet.

"There is no God but the One God," and Mohammed was sent to reveal him. This is what the Prophet himself believed. It is the creed of Muley Khamedo, his descendant.

The founder of Islam did not believe himself to be sinless. The *Yom ed-Deen*, the Terrible Day of Judgment, was an ever present thought. He hoped for mercy, but he feared justice. The dread of the final accounting is the most common theme of the Koran. Muley Khamedo also lives under the same shadow. There is

no divorce between faith and works in his mind. I have known very few men as scrupulously honest, as quick in almsgiving, as constant in prayer. He does not go to any *zawia*. He has no need of a crowd to help him in devotion. And sometimes he comes out of his little room with a radiance about him, which he has brought from that mystic Beyond of intimacy with the Most High, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

"Prayer and fasting with the lips and stomach," he said to me the other day, "are no good with God, unless the heart and the breast, they fast too and pray."

Muley Khamedo is only a servant at $8.33 a month, but he has seen the "burning bush."

MOGADOR, 1912.

XIV. THE SONG OF MULEY KHAMEDO

FOR more than a week now my servant Muley Khamedo has been composing a song.

After he bids me good-night he goes across the patio to his room, and in a few minutes I hear him fitting words to the staccato notes of his *ginbri.*

At first Moorish music sounds chaotic to Western ears, but, after one has become accustomed to it, it proves as formal, as logically mathematical, as our own. When our forefathers abandoned the Gregorian chant, they turned their backs on a musical system of great antiquity. The Mohammedans have kept to the old tradition and developed it. If Richard the Lion-Hearted could come back to life, he would find Moorish music more familiar to his ears than that of his own people. The lays of the old troubadours were chanted to the same theory of music which Muley Khamedo uses and which sounds uncouth and bizarre to us.

In one respect the music of the natives is definitely inferior — as well as different — from ours. They do not write down their compositions, and so much of their music is lost. Each generation must start anew, with only the memory of what the old men sing as a foundation. Such a condition exists with us in regard to the art of acting. Elderly people tell us to-day of the surpassing genius of the older Booth. But we have to take their word for it. He left no record by which we can judge him. So the Moors have traditions that such and such a man who lived in such a place was a great musician. Once in a while a native troubadour will preface his song by a statement that he learned it when a little boy from a very old man, who, in turn, had learned it from his grandfather, and so on back in a rather doubtful genealogy to a great name. But in general their music is not more than two, or at the most three, generations old, so it is unsophisticated and naïve. After a season of De Bussy and Strauss it is not unpleasant to listen to the simple music of their simpler instruments.

Muley Khamedo is an expert on the *ginbri*.

It is a two-stringed mandolin of beautiful craftsmanship. The body is of skin stretched over a tortoise-shell, and the long neck of cedar is elaborately chased. Often he brings in some of his friends, and they give me what we would call a "classical concert." Only one of these men is at all "cultured." He teaches youngsters to recite the Koran in the little school back of the *zawia* of the Derkawa. He beats a two-foot tambourine. The player on the *r'bab* is a carpenter. His instrument is the strangest of all. It has a round body like a large banjo, but instead of strings it has a wisp of horsehairs, like that of our own violin bow. He fingers this and saws across it with a bow of one string. It has a very plaintive and sometimes an exceedingly sweet and poignant tone. A Negro porter plays a lisping reed flageolet called a "*shibabah*." And with this strangely assorted orchestra they play for me such songs as they know by rote.

I have already learned to distinguish the more common forms of composition. The *keemjad* is a sort of address of welcome or eulogy to the patron. They always begin with one of

these as a sort of duty to me in payment for the pot of tea. The *kaseeda*, in quite a different key and rhythm, is more or less like our ballad. Most of these deal with the brave days in Spain, sometimes of a more modern intertribal feud. Their songs of the open road, the lyrics of the camel-drivers in the great wastes of the desert, are the ones which would make the most direct appeal to Western ears. The *Wanderlust* is international. It is very rarely that they know the name of the authors of these songs; they are the work of anonymous persons whose music has somehow survived. Some few of the *kaseeda* dealing with the wars in Andalusia may be old, but the most, I think, are only ephemeral. For a decade or so they will be sung, and then will be forgotten. The one exception seems to be the *abada*, a hymn of praise to God which they sing without instruments and which they always ascribe to some saint — the "*abada* of Muley Abd el-Kader"; as we say, "Luther's Hymn." These, the natives claim, are very old. It is probable that one who was familiar with the music of the later Roman Empire might find echoes of it in these old religious songs.

But for several days Muley Khamedo has been working over his *ginbri* with a tentative touch. He would repeat a few notes several times and then add one. As like as not it would displease him, and he would begin all over again. When at last he had a few measures which suited him, he would try to find words for them. At first I thought he was recalling some half-forgotten song. But as he kept at it night after night and it gradually grew in length I realized that he was composing.

Now it does not often happen that your servant who brushes your clothes, blacks your boots, and runs errands — all for $8.33 a month — spends his evenings composing the words and music of a song. As my own trade is humble prose, I began to find it difficult to ask menial services of Muley Khamedo.

Last night he completed it. He sang it over and over again, with increasing sureness of touch and voice. As I turned out my light he was still at it. I could see him across the court, sitting cross-legged in his doorway, looking up at the great pale moon overhead and singing softly to himself this thing which he had created.

It has not often been my good fortune to see a person who seemed perfectly happy. So I watched him for some time. When Leonardo looked at his completed "Mona Lisa," I think the same spirit must have shone in his eyes which illumined the face of my servant.

This morning I asked him to translate the song for me. He was unfeignedly embarrassed.

"It is not a fine song," he said. "I am not a poet. I will write down for you a very beautiful *kaseeda* about the wars of our Lord the Sultan Yakub el Mansur, who built the great Kutubuya Tower in Marakesh. It is very old."

"Dried peas have never turned to pearls in my mouth," he said, as a further protest, when I insisted.

This was an allusion to the legend of Sidi Hammo, the greatest of the Berber poets. Desiring passionately the gift of song that he might worthily defend the beauty of Fadma in an *a'hidous*, or tournament of poesy, he made a pilgrimage to the tomb of a holy miracle-worker, and, having sent up his prayer, he fell asleep before the shrine. He dreamed that some dried peas in his mouth had turned to pearls. And

so, knowing that he had been blessed with the benediction of music, he returned to his people and made Fadma the Beatrice of the Berbers.

But at last my insistence overcame the modesty of Muley Khamedo, and painfully, in his broken English, helped out occasionally by a phrase of French, he tried to give me his song. Now no peas have ever changed to pearls in my mouth. I cannot give the rhythm, nor any hint of the intricate, interlaced rhyme of Muley Khamedo's verses. But, in one element at least, the lyrics of all races can be compared. Deeper than the mechanism of prosody lies the poetic imagination, the trick of conjuring up vivid pictures and apt comparisons in compressed space. The song, as it dealt with love, was a *moheba*. It is a form as rigid in number of lines and infinitely more complex in rhyme than our sonnet. All I can hope to do is to put into intelligible English some suggestion of its rich coloring:

1. "Rock Pigeon — thou bird of swift and tireless wing — take this my message.
2. Haste with my greetings to Bakht, the large-eyed maiden,
3. Speed to the banks of the river Aït Mezal.

4. Search out the house of my mistress. Heed my words carefully.
5. Tell her: 'Thy lover strays in the wastes of the desert. Passion consumes him like the breath of the south wind.'
6. Tell her: 'The seasons change the earth's colors. Rain follows the dryness. Love comes to the lonely.'
7. Tell her: 'I pray Allah to send me south in the winter, that my heart may find cooling waters.'
8. Bird of swift wing, you will know her by the hair which hangs down to her girdle of silver.
9. The holy letters of the phrase, 'The Compassionate, the Merciful,' cannot rival the grace of her eyebrows. They are like two of the Most Beautiful Names of God written by an expert penman.
10. Her eyes are like the mouths of murderous cannon. The moisture of her tongue like molten lead.
11. Her mouth is like a rare jewel in the tray of a merchant to one who collects precious stones. The dealer in wild honey has no sweets like the perfume of her breath.
12. Her body is white as the light of a candle shining through its own wax — yea, it is white as the moon on its thirteenth night.
13. Her thighs are like columns carved by a great architect, carved of white marble to sustain the dome of a mosque.
14. The white arm of this woman gleams like a cimetar in the hand of a charging warrior. When she comes forth, the anklets about her feet make pleasant music — anklets of carved silver about feet white and fragrant as the white narcissus."

The ninth verse sounds far-fetched and labored to Western readers. We have that contempt for the written word which comes from our familiarity with universal education. We can all scribble. Penmanship is no longer an art. Not so in the East. Here "writing" is a highly respected craft. And the expert scribes of Islam spend their greatest skill, their most loving care, in copying the Holy Books and in illuminating these Most Beautiful Names. Muley Khamedo's simile is common in Mohammedan poetry.

This, in fact, is a criticism which his verses cannot escape — they are not original. The whole composition bears a marked resemblance to a poem by Ahmed bin bou Aroua, which is given, along with a French version, by M. Alexandre Joly in his "Remarques sur la Poésie moderne chez les nomades algériens."

Muley Khamedo seemed much pleased with his twelfth verse, and even lit a candle to show me how very white it looks at the top, where the wax is illumined by the flame. He gave me an intricate astronomical explanation of the phases of the moon, and how it always

reaches its greatest glory on the thirteenth night, when it sets a few minutes after sunrise.

"Is not the sun the lover of the moon?" he added. "Of course she shines brightest when she sees him face to face. All the great poets say the same."

He made no bones about admitting his plagiarism. But when some of his musical friends came in and I suggested that he sing his song for them, he was covered with confusion and absolutely refused. He had been willing to tell it to me, he said — was not I his father and his mother, his cool shade in the desert — but these men would laugh at him. A rhyme in the third line was forced, and in another place the music was wrong. He would not submit it to native critics.

But, admitting that the song of Muley Khamedo is a mosaic of phrases adapted from the classics, that the rhyme in the third line is faulty, the wonder of the matter is hardly decreased. Here in Morocco you can hire a servant for ten *duros* the month who will be familiar with the best poetry of his people, and will compose beautiful, if not wholly original, verses.

And this group of Moors who come in now and then to play for me is not exceptional. If you wander through the city at nightfall, you hear music on every side. At home I know two or three circles that come together when possible to play and sing, without thought of reward or applause, for the pure joy of the music. But I do not know any one of my own race who can improvise as some of these Arabs and Berbers can.

Almost every traveller in Northwest Africa has recorded his amazement at the facility with which the native bards extemporize. I recall from my own experience a never-to-be-forgotten night on the edge of the desert in southern Algeria.

There had been a long day's ride. My comrade, a Frenchman, had tried to relieve the monotony of the road by singing and re-singing a doggerel *chanson*, of which the senseless refrain ran:

"Sur le bi, sur le bou, sur le bi le bou le banc."

It was a resplendent North African day. The air had been cleaned by the sun's heat — as we sometimes feel it cleansed by rain at

home; every breath was a profound caress. The intense white light on the sand, the creak of the sweaty saddles, the jackal that watched us furtively from behind a parched cactus, the ache of tired muscles which somehow the surroundings changed into an almost voluptuous pleasure, all mingled in a weird and endlessly fascinating phantasmagoria.

At nightfall we came to an Arab encampment and were hospitably received. After the *kous-kous-soo* one of the young men sang. There were only a plaintive reed and handclapping for accompaniment. There was an address of welcome to the guests whom Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful, had sent to their tents — there was praise of hospitality. On and on went the improvisation. There was a long list of rhyming localities which the singer had visited, and glorification of nomad life. There were richly colored figures involving the gold of the desert sand unstained by vile commercial use, the false genii of the mirage, the life-saving wells. There was the inevitable plaint over the large-eyed maiden who had been left behind. There was a detailed catalogue of her charms.

The verses were threaded together hodge-podge, mixing up the first person and the third unaccountably. The transitions were startling. One moment he sang of the beauty of his beloved when her girdle was unclasped, the next of the horror of an unclasped girth-buckle of a war-horse in action. The moon was, I think, in its thirteenth night. The black camel's-hair tents threw fantastic, grotesque shadows. On and on, exhaustlessly, went the improvisation. If a hyena laughed somewhere off in the night, the young man worked it somehow into his song. If a horse neighed or a camel grunted, it suggested a new simile. And over all was the poetic glamour of the moon.

Although one can find such extemporizing bards anywhere in North Africa, here in southern Morocco is their true home. The greatest of all the wandering troubadours are Berbers from the Great Atlas. The patron of their guild is Sidi Hamed ou Mousa, whose shrine is in the south country near Tazerwalt. There all aspiring poets make pilgrimages. They kill a sheep before the ancient shrine, and spend weeks in fasting and prayer. If their hearts

are pure, if their passion for song is untainted with hope of gain, if they are free from pride, the old miracle of Sidi Hammo is repeated, the dried peas turn to pearls in their mouths, and they go forth as Meistersingers. The natives call them *raïs* — the same honorable title they give to a commander of soldiers.

These troubadours occupy a position in Moorish society that has no counterpart in our land, which is saved from tunelessness only by extravagantly paid professionals and gramophones. Everywhere they are welcomed guests — in the fortress of the *kaïd*, in the tent of the nomad, in the palaces of the Sultans, in the mud huts of the *fellaheen*. They are great travellers — wayfarers in the deepest sense of the word. Almost all of them have made the *hadje* to Mecca; some go farther and visit the shrines of Bagdad and Persia. One whom I met in Tangier had been to Samarkand in Russian Turkestan. And as they always end their songs with prayer and praise to Sidi Hammo ou Mousa, the name of their patron is known throughout the length and breadth of Islam.

A talent for music is to these people a direct

gift from God, and this *baraka*, as they call it, carries with it strict and heavy responsibilities. If a Sultan, stirred by the magic of their "gift," showers them with rich raiment, they must part with it to the first needy beggar they meet. If a rich *kaïd*, charmed by their fulsome praise, invites them to make their home in his castle, they must refuse. The road is their home. If they stopped overlong in one place because it offered them ease and luxury, the pearls in their mouths would change again to worthless peas. If they sang only for the rich and never brought the cheer of their music to the abodes of poverty, their throats would become parched, their voices harsh and displeasing. So also would they lose their *baraka* if they became puffed up with pride, if ever they sang for their own glory, and forgot that their "gift" came from Sidi Hammo ou Mousa.

These devotees of minstrelsy, these saints of song, are of course relatively rare. But a lesser gift of music is almost universal among the Berbers. Their national pastime is the *a'hidous*, or song tournament, which they perform whenever any joyous occasion, as a wed-



"A VILLAGE IN SOUTHERN ALGERIA"

ding, a birth, or a circumcision, offers an excuse for a celebration.

The Berbers are a race entirely apart from the Arabs. They have a distinct language, they are monogamous, and their women are unveiled and mingle freely with the men. In fact, the *a'hidous* is primarily a woman's fête. While de Segonzac was exploring the Atlas one of his Berber scribes wrote down a quaint account of one of these performances. Muley Khamedo tells me earnestly that there is no pleasure this side of the gardens of paradise to be compared with an *a'hidous*. I have very freely translated some of de Segonzac's text, but most of the following description comes from my servant:

"When the women of a village are very glad — perhaps it is a baby, perhaps somebody comes home from a long journey — they made *a'hidous*. They send out everywhere to find a *raïs*. If a rich man marry his daughter, he send very far for great *raïs*. Then the women cook a very fine dinner for many people. The *raïs* comes with his musicians. For *a'hidous* they make music only with tambourines. After every-

body has eaten, the *raïs* and his musicians sit down in a line and make signal to commence. Then the women laugh very much and push each other forward. And all of them pretend they do not want to play. You see, no woman dare to play *a'hidous* unless she is clever. She must know how to make singing and poetry. And also she must have a sharp tongue to make people laugh. All the while the men make music and say, 'Hurry! Hurry!' And at last five, six clever women, perhaps ten, sit down in line opposite the *raïs* and musicians. Two lines, men and women, sitting in court-yard, faces to each other, and very much public standing round to hear. Oh, it is a very fine sight! The Berber women very beautiful, and all have on fine clothes and earrings and bracelets and necklaces. And there are many candles and lamps, all very fine. And first the *raïs* make a prayer to Sidi Hammo ou Mousa, and then everybody still while the *raïs* beats his tambourine and looks at the ladies. When he find one he likes he begin to sing:

"'Salute, O Bird of Beauty, O Pigeon.
May God inspire my tongue to praise this woman,

This stranger, who charms my eyes !
In mercy the Merciful has led me here
To this village blest with her beauty.'

"The woman whom he has addressed replies:

"'God give you grace for your salutation,
Oh thou who gives me such praise !
From whence have you come, O Chanticleer?
Oh thou of sonorous voice, who was thy mother?
On what did thy father nourish thee
That now the words of thy tongue are pure gold?
She whom thou lovest deceives thee. Thou art pinched with cold.
In the shelter of my arms thou wouldst be warm indeed.'

"The *raïs:*

"' As paradise is life with one beloved:
So better far is death than life unloved.
The Son of Song must tramp the path alone;
Oh, make this place a spot where he was loved ! ' "

The improvised dialogue goes on thus amorously for a while, but soon the tone changes and the two begin to exchange rhyming riddles. The answers are given with extravagant invective, which seems quite inane to me, but is, Muley Khamedo assures me, greatly appreciated by a Berber audience:

" Tell me what is this, ' A sea without a wave? '
Answer me and I will be your slave."

" It is an ' eye.' May God blind thine !
If you are intelligent you ought to divine
And explain to me, ' A beast in motley gown.'
Answer me and I will be your clown."

" ' A leopardess.' May she eat your mother's heart !
If you are intelligent and think yourself smart,
Explain to me, ' A garden of flowers planted
Without laborers,' and your desire will be granted."

" ' The heaven at night.' Let us cease
Blackguarding one another
And unite in friendship, that release
May come to our imprisoned love.
O Allah, lord of keys and locks, assist us ! "

But after a few more rounds of love-making they begin again on mutual abuse. This part of the performance stirs noisy applause from the audience, roars of laughter for each witty jibe, and jeers for the one who comes off discomfited in the duel.

And so they alternate in fantastic love-making (which is tempered by the presence of the audience, very probably including the lady's husband), an exchange of childish charades, and picturesque, if venomous, abuse.

"And when they have no more breath in their hearts," Muley Khamedo says, "the *raïs* spins his tambourine on his thumb as sign to stop singing. Then everybody gets up, and all the women clap their hands and sing. Perhaps they sing a very pretty song, 'Where are the flowers of March?' [The Berbers must have had a François Villon.] Or perhaps they sing some other song. And when they have all some more tea they all begin to dance.

"Seven, eight men — perhaps twelve, if it is a big house — make a line, and as many ladies. The *raïs* and his musicians begin making music again. The men and women all make waves with their bodies and sing and clap the hands, and the men come towards the ladies, and the ladies go back. When they come to the wall of the house, the ladies all say, 'You, you,' and then the men go back, and the ladies come after them — all night. When one man or one lady is tired, he sits down, and another begins — all night. Once, when a sheik got married, they began making *a'hidous* after noon prayer, all day, and at night they began again with a new *raïs* — all

night. And in the morning the first *raïs* made another *a'hidous*. Oh, very fine!"

De Segonzac's scribe, after describing the dance much as Muley Khamedo does, says:

"They continue so until the break of day, when each one goes his own way. So terminates the *a'hidous*, the pastime and dance of the Berbers, such as the forefathers established it in ancient times."

The Berbers of the coast and of the Sous Valley call this celebration the *'ah-wash*, but it varies very little from the *a'hidous* of the high Atlas.

It is part of the duty of the *raïs* to take part in such rustic merrymaking. But they are always on the move. Sometimes one of them comes to Mogador, and then always Muley Khamedo announces the fact with great impressiveness. Partly, I suppose, because he is a Shareef, and partly perhaps because I am generally spoken of as "the tall Christian who is a friend of Hadje Omar," he often succeeds in persuading one of them to come to my house. It is a great occasion, to which I invite all my Moorish friends.

I have been especially impressed by the religious tone they give to the proceedings. As soon as the *raïs* arrives everybody stands up and recites the *Fatihah*. It is the *paternoster* of the Mussulmans, and in itself a choice example of Arabic verse:

"Praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures!
The Compassionate, the Merciful!
King of the Day of Judgment!
Thee we worship and Thee we ask for help.
Guide us in the True Path,
The Path of those to whom Thou art gracious,
Not of those upon whom is Thy wrath
Nor of those who go astray."

And when the performance is over, they again rise and pray.

The first time one of these *raïs* came to sing for me I took Muley Khamedo aside and asked him how much I was expected to pay the performer. My servant was shocked at the way I put it.

"Oh, sir," he protested, "you do not give money to him, but to Sidi Hammo ou Mousa; may Allah grant him peace! Give what you like — it is to God, not to man."

This cloak of religion which the *raïs* throw

about their craft is surprising, as Mohammed had small friendliness for versifiers. He regarded his own poetic gift as an especial dispensation from Allah. He and his followers felt it to be the supreme sign of his mission, his one miracle. And it was indeed remarkable that, not knowing how to read or write, he could dictate the Koran — generally accepted as the consummation of Arabic literature. The other bards of his day spent their talent in glorifying wine and licentiousness or in composing hymns to false gods. His judgment on them was severe. I do not find any direct reference to the matter in the Koran itself. But authentic tradition credits the Prophet with these two sayings:

"Those who have never made nor listened to music here below will enjoy in the Future Gardens a supplementary bliss which is impossible to describe."

"The singers and players on instruments will have to suffer frightful torments in the seven hells."

But the spirit of poesy is so strong among these people, that, in spite of formal religious

interdiction, they regard their singers as saints, they open and close their concerts with prayer. The dictum of Mohammed had sufficient weight to kill the plastic arts. A word of his could accomplish more than all the temperance societies of Christendom. He could prevent usury and eradicate a dozen other deep-seated customs. But he could not suppress music.

MOGADOR, 1912.

XV. THE PERFUMES OF ARABY

MOHAMMED, the Prophet, admitted loving two things of this Earth — Women and Perfumes. So now that the French have prohibited the sale of human flesh and have closed the old Slave Market in Tunis, the Sok Attarin — The Bazaar of Perfumes — is the most aristocratic place in the native business quarter.

It is a narrow, covered street, hardly more than a tunnel. Here and there square holes in the arched roof let in shafts of the African sun, which, reflected from the whitewashed walls, illumine the whole place. Little shops, hardly more than closets, are let into the walls on either side. The largest is not seven feet broad and four feet deep. The floors are about three feet above the street, so that as you walk through the Sok, your face is on a level with the merchants, seated cross-legged among their wares.

Despite the minuteness of their establish-

ments, these dealers in concentrated fragrance are rich. The contents of one of these little shops may run up in value to the tens of thousands of dollars. Hadje Akmad bin Ali Jerbi — who is my friend — besides his stock in trade owns vast lotus fields on his native island. This year's harvest of roses from his gardens on Mount Zaghouan, across the bay, will run up into the tons. He has acres and acres of geraniums and employs a dozen or more agents, who — in the early spring — buy wild narcissus by the bushel basket from the native women and children who gather them. He also owns the florist establishment which is presided over by a poor relative — Bou Kassim bin Abd el-Kader.

We of the West have had our nostrils spoiled by the various stenches of civilization. It is best to approach Hadje Akmad by easy stages. We will begin with Bou Kassim, who — although only a relatively poor relation — is a man of renown in Tunis. There is no personage in New York to whom we can compare him — unless it be the bartender who invents a new and popular cocktail. Bou Kassim's *chef*

d'œuvre — the basis of his fame — is a little bouquet no bigger than a robin's egg. Its name he tells me — in his disjointed French — is "*La rêve d'une jeune fille amoureuse.*" Of course he has other bouquets in his repertoire, but this "Dream of a young girl in love" is his specialty.

He is a venerable, wizened old man, with a beard like that of Abraham or Jeremiah, and he wears a vest of burnt orange and a *burnous* of the vaguest green. He sits cross-legged all day long in his little box of a shop, surrounded by bowls of fresh flowers, and loves to discourse on the Vanity of Human Wishes and the all-pervading immanence of Allah. When a customer demands an ordinary bouquet, Bou Kassim does not stop his flow of philosophy. But when his specialty is demanded, he falls silent. He begins by fixing on the end of a stiff wire a minute piece of sponge, around it he binds tightly a circle of tuberose buds, which he pricks open with a needle. Then one by one he picks off the petals of a fresh rose — a particularly fragrant, deep red variety — and binds them about the core, then comes a circle of

jasmine and another of geranium petals. All this is bound together tightly. Bou Kassim smells it several times judicially. I have seen him tear some to pieces if they did not suit him and rebuild them. With a reverent gesture he picks up a roll of gazelle skin and carefully unwraps, first a slender glass rod and then a little phial of gilt and green glass. He murmurs a prayer for guidance to Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful, and, opening the phial, deposits with infinite care a drop of thick amber liquid on the little piece of sponge — and all the street for several yards around is pervaded with a breath from Paradise.

The purchaser, who has avidly watched the process, pays him two francs — ten times the price of an ordinary bouquet — and, holding it out at arm's-length, inhales with sensuous ecstasy the incisive fragrance. Later in the day, when the scent has been somewhat dissipated, he will press his nose against the little piece of sponge and then he may throw the bouquet away if he will — the pungent perfume will stay in his nostrils many hours.

Having luxuriously tasted the virgin joy of

the fresh nosegay, the purchaser sticks the wire stem under the edge of his *tarboosh*, so that it hangs down across his cheek — and goes on about his business. The tourist, who sees him pass — this strange, tightly compressed boutonnière hanging down before his face — is apt to remark on the queer ideas which savages have on personal adornment. You have already begun to make some progress in understanding the soul of the Arab, when you have come to realize that these little bouquets are not intended to be looked at — they are *nose*-gays — to smell.

"But why," I asked Bou Kassim, "do not your rival florists learn how to concoct similar bouquets? Do you have a copyright law on such creations in Islam?"

"It is not the law. It is the secret of this unguent." He picked up the gaudy phial, with the contents of which he had — from a nasal point of view — gilded the rose. "No one but Hadje Akmad knows the secret."

Now if you can get the concept of old Bou Kassim, with his patriarchal white beard and his flaming vest, sitting there day after day and

winning fame by mixing smells — remember that the true Moslim does not drink — you are in a fair way to comprehend the solemnity of Hadje Akmad.

Bou Kassim sells his "*rêve d'une jeune fille amoureuse*" at ten times the normal price because of the magic fluid in his little gilt bottle. Hadje Akmad is the magician who conceived and executed that fluid. Although he does not despise the revenue which comes from the little florist shop, he would not himself stoop to such petty trade. He deals in frankincense and myrrh. King Solomon sent special ambassadors to the Phœnician merchants of Tyre and Sidon in quest of the wares in which Hadje Akmad deals. He has spices from Samarkand, chips of the holy *Aod el Kmari* from Mecca, beauty salves from Cashimir, a nail polish from Isfahan. But above all he deals in precious scents. The only European article in his little shop is a pair of jeweller's scales with which he weighs out his wares.

The cult of perfumes goes much farther back than the comparatively recent days when Mohammed gave it his sanction. Three quarters

of an hour's ride from Tunis is the place where Carthage stood. A strange fate has overtaken the ancient city. The vengeance of Rome was complete, no one stone was left in place upon another. The site was sown with salt. A pagan Roman city, a Christian Roman city, a Vandal city, and an Arab city have been built on the same site and have passed away. The archæologists have not discovered with any certainty where a single one of the buildings of Punic Carthage stood. But beneath the many strata formed by the ruins of vanished civilizations they have come upon the graveyards of the ancient city. And so, although we know very little about how Hannibal and his friends lived, we know exactly how they died. We do not know the plan of their houses, but we can see how they built their graves. We know how they wanted to appear before their gods.

Five hundred years before our era commenced the Carthaginians loved perfumes. There is no other fact so evident about them, as one strolls through the Museum. Before they closed a tomb, friends put in the grave a little food, a lighted lamp, a little censer of burning

incense, and a phial of fragrance. In the famous scene from Flaubert's great romance of Carthage, where Salammbô comes to the tent of Matho, it is told how among her jewels were earrings from which dripped perfume on her cheeks and naked shoulders — perfumes which intoxicated the barbarian chieftain. There are hundreds of just such earrings in the Museum there where Carthage stood.

Some nights ago I went with a native friend to see a famous Algerian *danseuse*, who was passing through Tunis. It was the inevitable *danse du ventre* of the Barbary Coast — a dance utterly vulgar from our Western point of view — but a dance as intricate in its technique, as formal, as classic in its traditions, as any we ever see on our stage at home. And when her dance was finished, she came down among the spectators — as is the custom — bending her head that we might stick a coin on her forehead. And as she stood before me, I noticed that she wore just such earrings as Flaubert gave to Salammbô, just such earrings as the archæologists dig up from the graves two thousand and more years old. So Hadje Akmad is not only

doing a prosperous business, he is keeping alive a tradition as old as civilization.

And Hadje Akmad — in his perfumes — deals with something very close to the "inscrutable soul" of the East. Perhaps there is something in it worth the study of the colonial administrators — English and French — who throw up their hands in despair over this "inscrutability." But I — who am not a colonial administrator — can afford to laugh at the amusing paradoxes which accompany the effort to "civilize" the Arab. Omar, Hassan and Ali — — the Tom, Dick and Harry of Tunis — have learned to ride on trolley cars. They have become so civilized in this matter that they jump on and off while the cars are moving. One conductor tells me that they have even become expert in "beating the company out of fares." But neither Omar, nor Hassan, and only occasionally Ali, will utilize the elaborate sanitary appliances the French have installed for their comfort.

Walking the other day with a French official, we encountered a gorgeously attired native child of four or five. He wore a soft blue gray



THE SOK ATTARIN, TUNIS

tunic, a vest of flamingo pink embroidered with gold, and a tiny *burnous* of watered lavender. His little head was close-cropped except for one long lock — by which it is hoped the Prophet will pull him up into Paradise. And tight in his baby hands he clutched a tin locomotive of unmistakably German make.

"*Regardez*," cried my French friend. "Not five years old and he has learned the trick of his race. He accepts our toys — but did you ever see a child who looked less Europeanized? We never get below the surface things — the toys. His father probably has a phonograph and a cheap alarm clock. But *au fond* they remain a race apart."

And — although not with the same disappointment, for I like the Mohammedans as they are — I must add my own testimony. Even when we catch them young and send them to Europe to school and give them a degree from the Sorbonne or from Oxford, they no more appreciate our ideals — than we appreciate their perfumes.

For days on end I have been working over official reports in the "*Department d'Enseigne-*

ment." I have been helped by a young Tunisien, whose engraved card reads "M. Ahmed bin Akmad — *Chef de Cabinet.*" He was educated in Paris and has travelled in England and Germany, studying their systems of primary schools. He speaks the three languages fluently. Except for his red *Stambouli tarboosh* he dressed — and dressed well — after the French fashion. Up-to-date, modern he is — or rather had seemed — in every detail. When the statistics on education had become too boresome, we had climbed to the *terrasse* of the Department building and smoked a cigarette and enjoyed the marvellous view across the Lake and Bay of Tunis and the place where Carthage was. We had discussed all subjects imaginable. M. Ahmed had vehement ideas on literature and music. He disliked Zola, he did not think that Galsworthy came up to the brave old tradition of English letters. He was a partisan of Debussy — not even Beethoven could be compared to this modern Frenchman.

Well. Last week was the *Aïd el Kebir*, — the greatest of the feasts of Islam. It resembles

somewhat our Christmas and somewhat our Thanksgiving. It is in celebration of the time when Abraham was about to immolate his son Isaac and at the last minute Jehovah relented and let him off with the sacrifice of a sheep. All good Moslems overeat and rejoice in their children. Having wandered about in the native city, enjoying the gayety, I came to the Sok Attarin and turned aside to wish "Many happy returns" to Hadje Akmad. He — as rotund as Bou Kassim is meagre — was enveloped in holiday attire, a salmon-colored *burnous*, covered with a gauzy, veil-like *haïk*, all set off by a flaming yellow vest. Seated on the bench before his shop I found a younger edition of himself, arrayed with equal gorgeousness. Not till he got up and greeted me amiably in English did I recognize M. Ahmed bin Akmad of the Department of Education. It had not occurred to me to connect this dapper young official with my friend, the dealer in perfumes.

"Oh, yes," Ahmed explained, "I am his son. It is our holiday," he continued. "One does not have to be all day in the bureau. One can be comfortable."

"You don't find European clothes comfortable," I asked.

"No," he replied laconically and a bit harshly.

Having had some trouble in making myself understood by the Hadje, — his French, like that of all the older generation, being even more halting than mine, — I pressed his son into service as interpreter. I find the old man's commerce fascinating. Ahmed told me the romantic story of each jar — how this one held imprisoned the souls of twenty thousand jasmine blossoms, and that contained an incense compounded of cedar chips from Lebanon and sandal wood from the Punjab and resin from a tree which grows — he did not know just where — but far to the South, in the land of the Black Infidels, beyond the Great Desert.

We were interrupted by a customer. He was an immense Nubian, with a head and neck like the bust of the Roman Emperor Comidius. Across his cheek was the brand of three parallel lines, which marked him as a slave. He made some guttural sounds with the bottom of his throat and laid down a French gold piece.

Hadje Akmad opened a jar and weighed out a cubic inch of dark salve.

"What is that?" I asked Ahmed.

"The Pomade of Wild Cats. It also comes from the South. They put a wild cat in a cage which turns like your squirrel cages — and prod it with a hot iron to make it run. They make it run very much — even after it is tired — until it perspires very much — until it is too tired to run any more — till it drops dead. It is very wet with perspiration. It has sweated out even its soul. Then they scrape off the moisture — very carefully. You will understand that it is a precious liquid — for one wild cat does not give much and they are hard to catch. When they have gathered in this manner a potful, they boil it — with many spices — till it is a paste. It is more precious than the strongest essence of the Rose."

I lifted the lid and looked, then smelt, the dark pasty ointment. I must have made a wry face over the unsavory mess. Ahmed smiled cryptically, the old Hadje trembled all over with amusement like a gelatine pudding.

"*Ça. Ce n'est pas un parfum,*" he said. "*C'est un Aphrodisiaque.*"

"You are shocked," Ahmed said, "at the idea of hundreds of wild cats slaughtered to add zest to a Moslim holiday. What hypocrites you Christians are," he went on, when I did not deny his charge. "To-day," he seemed to feel that some explanation of his outbreak was necessary, "to-day I am not a French official. I do not have to lie — for a salary. To-morrow, if you will come again to the Bureau, I will once more be polite. But to-day" — he waved his hands — "I am a Mussulman. And I prefer our Prophet — may Allah grant him repose — to yours. I prefer perfumes to whiskey and soda. It is certainly impolite — but true."

"I wonder if you realize," I said, "how much more interesting your impoliteness is than your politeness."

"It certainly is more interesting to me," he said. "It is revolting to pretend all the time. — One superiority I grant you Christians," he went on after some consideration, "your bullets and battleships. But on the rest of

your civilization — I spit." He picked out a stone in the pavement as typical of all those things we are wont to boast of and suited an action to his words. "I grant that you can kill us. That is no matter. *Mektub.* We — and you — are dust under the Feet of Allah. But you try to educate us. It is for that that we hate you.

"I know that back of all the Christian thieves and murderers whom your governments send to rule us there are many of your people who want to help us, who seriously think you have something to teach us, who want to lift us up to your level. And all the while the humblest mule-boy in the Sok looks down on the Resident General — looks down on you, who are not a Frenchman, but of the same civilization.

"I have read many books — in French and English — about us, and all the authors, who were not fools, understood that we despised them. Some say it is the fanaticism of our religion. Poo! Some Frenchmen have become Mohammedans and we despise them more than we did before. It is not re-

ligion. It is that we prefer our civilization to yours.

"Very long ago one of our Poets said, 'There is nothing more beautiful than Nature — no greater joy than Love.' What have you, with all your science, learned about life, which is wiser than that? Is sugar sweeter because you know its chemical formula? Is the sheen of the moon fairer because your physicists have a theory about the vibration of light waves through the ether?

"You talk a great deal about the Beautiful. You turn from the work of Allah, the Great Artist, to your Museums. You have not yet learned that the movement of Life is the soul of Beauty. Your canvases smeared with colored muds, your rigid marble statues, leave us cold. Your Art is dead. Like a rose without perfume — it has no soul. 'There is nothing more beautiful than Nature.'

"And your ethics! You are shocked at our Harems. Well — we are shocked at the insistent sexuality of your life. What chance have you at serious contemplation? You are eternally surrounded by women indecently clad.



AN ALGERIAN DANSEUSE





It is disgusting — the way your women show themselves to every passer-by. We would stone our women, if they appeared in public as yours do at the Opera.

"And the materialism of your philosophy of Life. You are slaves to the Things you make. In the fury and hatred of your struggle to accumulate the Things, you miss the realities of Life. 'There is nothing more beautiful than Nature, there is no greater joy than Love.' You are blind to true Beauty, you have no faintest idea of what Love may be. And you want to civilize us!

"Kill us, if you will. I grant you your bullets and battleships. Yes. Kill us, if it amuses you — and Allah permits. But don't try to debase us with your civilization. Don't try to educate us. Keep your whiskey and leave us our perfumes."

He got up and stretched himself languorously.

"You will excuse my impoliteness," he said. "You yourself encouraged it. I am tired of futile talk in a civilized language. I will go to my uncivilized harem."

"You have indulged yourself — and me —

in impoliteness," I said. "I will return the compliment — a rare and real compliment — and ask how many wives you have."

"One," he replied. And then with a defiant shrug of his shoulders he turned towards me again. "But don't think I am civilized up to monogamy. I can afford but one on the salary our French masters pay. But when I am thirty, my father — may Allah grant him long life — will turn over his business to me and I will leave the French service, which I hate, and — But the one I have now is waiting for me and I must buy her some flowers — some flowers and sweetmeats for the Feast Day. You see how uncivilized I am. If I had reached the high plane of culture to which your race has attained, I would celebrate the fête by taking her to a noisy restaurant — show my wife to the world side by side with the man who was exhibiting his mistress at the next table. We would befuddle our brains with champagne. Would she be any happier? No! No! I think the perfumes are better."

"And the pomade of wild cats?" I said, for his sarcasm had stung me.

His face flushed angrily — and then he suddenly became icily polite.

"May Allah grant that neither of us shall need it for many years. And to-morrow — *Monsieur* — at the bureau, I will show you some more statistics on the primary schools for native children. *À votre service.*"

Ahmed bin Akmad — the modern, the critic of Galsworthy's novels, with the untouched, antique soul of the Orient beneath his veneer of culture — strode down the Sok, in his gorgeous, graceful robes, to buy a nosegay for his wife — the mysterious woman, whom I may not see, about whom he will not talk.

Bidding good-by to his father — the dealer in perfumes — I strolled away the rest of the afternoon, through the multi-colored, holiday crowds of the Soks. The spell of strange smells was in my nostrils and at night I could not sleep. I sat for many hours at my open window. Somewhere off across the flat roofs of the native city some one was playing on a reed flute. No one who has ever been in Barbary can forget that plaintive sound. The Arabs say that only two songs have been invented by

man — the song of Love, the song of Hate — of Women and War. The great North African moon hung low in the sky, casting its magic glamour over the white roofs, the domes of the holy tombs, the graceful minarets of the mosques. And, as Ahmed had said, the theory of light waves seemed very unimportant. And through the delectable night came always the sound of that distant flute. It was a song of women — of a woman who loved. I doubt if any of our composers — with orchestras of a hundred pieces — have ever more completely expressed the concept. And all through the White City of Tunis there were thousands of women to whom that quaint and simple melody must have sounded like self-expression — veiled women, whom I could never see, strange women, whom I could never know. The thrill of unaccustomed smells was in my nose, the witchery of the East weighed upon me.

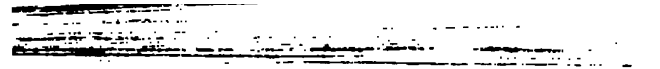
The Arabs are right in their proverb — "Mystery is the Perfume of Women."

TUNIS, 1912.

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